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GENERAL ATROL

A
COLLECTION
OF 1652
Mr 1 110
Farewel-Sermons

Preached by

Mr. CALAMY	1.	Dr. FACOMB	7.
Mr. WATSON	2.	Mr. BAXTER	8.
Mr. SCLATER	3.	Mr. JENKINS	10
Mr. WATSON	4.	Mr. LYE	11. 12
Dr. FACOMB	5.	Dr. MANTON	13
Mr. CASE	6.		

to their respective Congregations at their
departure from them,

To which is annexed,

A SERMON Preached at the Funeral of
Mr. *Simson Ash*; late Minister of the Gospel
at *St. Austins* in LONDON; by
Edmund Calamy, B. D.

2 Sam, 23. 1.

*Now these are the last Words of David, the sweet
singer of Israel,*

Printed in the Year 1662.

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THE
PUBLISHERS
TO THE
READER.



He words of dying men usually are very serious, weighty, and much regarded. The ensuing notes being the Preachers last legacies to their several congregations, a little before their civil, though voluntary death; by reason of the great concourse of people that were then assembled in all Churches, to hear their dying Pastors preach

preach their own funeral sermon
whilest they were yet alive; man-
being too distant from them, or too
much disturbed by the crowd, fel-
short of their share and portion
in them; others having lost much
of what they committed to their
memories, addressed themselves to
their friends that writ; but it
being found too tedious a work to
satisfy the desires of all by tran-
scriptions, some who had taken after
them as followeth, by the impor-
tunity of many, have been pre-
vailed with for the satisfaction of
their friends, to expose their notes
to publick view. It is not to be
expected (though all care and
faithfulness hath been used) that
th

the picture should answer the person in all things ; what defects therefore in any kind may be found herein, we humbly pray may not be imputed to the Reverend Authors, but unto the publishers hereof. We conceive we need not adde any thing to take off that clamour that is cast upon them, as if out of an humour, faction, or which is worse, disobedience to authority, they refused to conform ; enough is said by themselves, to give an account why they chose to take up their crosse and follow Christ, in a way of conscience and fidelity.

Reader, we will detain thee no longer from partaking of the fruit we here present thee with, but conclude,

clude, praying that the lives of
these worthy Ministers hearers,
may be their legible Epistles, seen
and read of all men; and that their
conversations may be such as be-
comes the Gospel of Christ, that
whither they (yet again) come and
see them, or else be absent, they
may hear of their affairs; that they
stand fast in one spirit, striving
together for the faith of the Go-
spel. Farewell.

SERMON.

(1)



S E R M O N I.

August 17. 1662.

2 SAM. 24. 14.

And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait; let us fall now into the hand of the Lord (for his mercies are great) and let me not fall into the hand of man.



IN which words we have three Parts.

1. Davids great perplexity and distress; *I am in a great strait.*

2. Davids Resolution.

1. Affirmative, *Let us fall into the hands of the Lord.*

2. Negative, *Let me not fall into the hands of man.*

3. We have the Reason of Davids choise, for the mercies of God are great. The mercies of wicked men are cruel: therefore let me not fall into the hands of men: but the mercies of God are many, and great:

B

therefore

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men: but the mercies of God are many, and great:*

B

therefore

therefore let us now fall into the hands of God.

1. For the first, that is, *Dauids* great distress, wherein we must speak,

1. To the distress it self: Then

2. To the person thus perplexed: *I am in a great strait: David a great man, David a godly man.*

1. In the perplexity it self, we shall consider:

1. The reality of this perplexity.

2. The greatness of it.

1. For the reality of it: after *David* had sinned in numbring the people, God sends the Prophet *Gad* to him, and puts three things to his choice, as you may read in verse 12. God was determined to make *David* smart for numbring the people, but leave it to *Dauids* liberty, whether he would have seven years famine, or three months to flee before his enemies, or three dayes pestilence: this was a posing Question, and *David* had cause to be in a great strait; for these objects are not amiable in their own nature, they are objects to be avoided and declined; in the first view of them they seem to be equally miserable, therefore *David* had cause to say he was in a strait.

2. This perplexity was not only real, but exceeding great: *I am in a great strait:* and there are two things made this so great.

1. The greatness of the punishments proposed, Famine, Sword, and Plague: these are the three besomes with which God sweeps mankind from off the earth: these are Gods three iron whips, by which

which he chastiseth sinful man : these are the three arrows shot out of the quiver of Gods wrath, for the punishment of man ; they are as one calleth them, *Tonsura humani generis*. In Rev. 6. you shall read of four Horses, when the four first Seals were opened: a white horse, a red horse, a black horse, & a pale horse : after Christ had ridden on the white horse propagating the Gospel, then follows the red horse, a type of War, then the black horse an Hieroglyphick of Famine: then the pale horse, the emblem of Pestilence. Now God was resolved to ride on one of these horses, and David must choose upon which God should ride ; this was a great strait : Let me present Davids lifting up his eyes to heaven, and speaking to God thus : O my God, what is this message thou hast sent me : thou offerest me three things : I am in a strait, I know which to refuse, but which to choose I know not : shall the Land of *Canaan*, a Land flowing with milk and honey, shall this Land endure seven years famine, and be turned into a wilderness, and dispeopled ? and shall I, whose hands thou hast taught to fight, and whose fingers to war, shall I that have subdued all my enemies, shall I in my old age, and all my Captains, fly three months before our enemies, and be driven to caves and rocks to hide our selves ? O thou my God, who art my refuge, shall I and my people be a prey to the pestilence that walketh in darkness and destruction, that walketh at noon day ? O my God, I know not what to do, *I am in a great strait.*

2. The second reason why this strait was so great, was, because of the guilt of sin that lay on Davids

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spirit: for *David* knew that this severe message was the fruit of the sin he committed in numbring the people. But you will say, Why, was it a sin in *David* to number the people: *Moses* had often numbred the people: three times, and it was not counted sin. *Josephus* answereth, the sin of *David* was, because he did not require the half shekel, which he was to have had from all were numbred, *Ex.* 30. 12, 13.

Others say he sinned in numbring all ages, whereas he was to number but from twenty years: but these are but conjectural Reasons. I conceive the sin of *David* was because he did it without a lawful call, and for an unlawful end: *Sine causa Legittima*: he sinned in the manner rather than in the matter: for there was no cause for him to number the people but curiosity, and no end but vain glory: *Go through all the tribes of Israel and number the people, that I may know the number of my people, ver. 2.* *David's* heart was lifted up with pride and creature-confidence: he begins to boast of the multitude of his people, and to trust in an arm of flesh; therefore God sends the Prophet to *David* to prick the bladder of his pride, as if God should say, I will teach you to number the people by lessening the number of your people: Now the burden of his sin did add much to the burden of this heavy message: *Ver. 13.* After *David* had numbred the people, his heart smote him: the message smites him, and his heart smites him, and he said, I have sinned greatly in that which I have done: now I beseech thee take away the iniquity of thy servant, for I have done very foolishly. If *David* had been to suffer this great punishment

nishment out of love to God, or for a good conscience, he would not have been so distressed: There are two sorts of straits in Scripture: some suffered for God and a good conscience; and there are straits suffered for sin.

1. There are straits suffered for God and a good conscience. *Heb. 11. 36. 37.* those Martyrs there were driven to great straits: but these were straits for God and a good Conscience, and these straits were the Saints greatest enlargements, they were so sweetned to them by the consolations and supportations of Gods Spirit; a prison was a paradise to them. *Heb. 10. 34.* they look joyfully at the spoiling of their goods. *Acts 5. 41.* they departed from the presence of the Council, rejoycing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. Straits for a good conscience are greatest enlargements; therefore *Paul* gloryeth in this strait, *Paul a prisoner, &c.*

2. There are straits suffered for sin, and these are envenomed by the guilt of sin: sin puts poison into all our distresses and perplexities. Now such was the strait into which *David* was now driven: it was a strait caused by sin, and that made it so unwelcome and uncomfortable: so that from hence I gather this Observation.

Doct. That sin and iniquity brings persons and nations into marvellous labyrinths and perplexities: into true, real and great molestations: a man free from sin, is free in the midst of straits: a man guilty of sin, is in a strait in the midst of freedom.

After *Adam* had sinned in eating of the forbidden fruit, the whole world was a prison to him : Paradise it self was an hell to him, he knew not where to hide himself from the presence of God. After that *Cain* had murdered his brother *Abel*, he was brought into such a strait, that he was afraid that every one that met him would slay him. Alas poor *Cain*, how many was there then in the world? we read but his father and mother, yet such was his distress, that he crieth out, every one that met him would slay him, *Gen.* 4. 14. Into what a strait did sin bring the old world? the deluge of sin brought a deluge of water to drown them. Into what a strait did sin bring *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*? the fire of lust raining in *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, brought down fire from heaven to destroy them. Sin brings external, internal, and eternal straits upon persons and nations.

1. Sin brings external straits; sin brings Famine, Sword, and Plague; sin brings Agues and Feavours, Gout and Stone, and all manner of Diseases: yea, sin brings death it self, which is the wages of sin. Read *Levit.* 26. and *Deut.* 23. and you will see a black roul of curses, which were the fruit of sin. Sin brought *Sion* into *Babylon*; and when the Jews had murdered Christ, forty years after they were brought into that distress, when the City was besieged by *Titus Vespasian*, that they did eat one another, the mother did eat her child; that whereas *David* had a choice which of the three he would have, either Famine, Plague, or Sword: the poor Jews had all three concatenated

ted together in the fledge : sin brings all manner of externall plagues.

2. Sin brought persons and Nations into internal straits : sin brings soul-plagues, which are worse then bodily plagues : sin brings hardness of heart, blindness of mind, a spirit of slumber, a reprobate sence; sin brings a spiritual famine upon a Land; it brings a famine of the word, *Amos 8. 11.* sin causes God to take away the Gospel from a people: sin brings internal plagues: sin awakens Conscience, and fills it full of perplexities : Into what a strait did sin drive *Judas*, after he had betrayed Christ ? Into what a strait did sin drive *Spira* ? Saint *Paul* gloried in his tribulations for God: but when he speaks of his sin, he cryeth out, *O miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death ?* David a valiant man, when he speaks of sin, saith, they are too heavy a burden for him to bear : *A wounded conscience who can bear !* saith the Wise man.

3. Sin bringeth eternall straits: O the strait that a wicked man shall be brought into at the great and dreadful day of judgement, when all the world shall be on fire about him ! when he shall call to the mountains to hide him, and to the rocks to cover him from the wrath of God : then will he cry out with David, *I am, O Lord, in a great strait.* And when the wicked shall be condemned to hell, who can expresse the straits they then shall be in ? *Bind the n hand and foot, and cast them into everlasting darkness,* *Matth. 25.* When a wicked man shall be

bound with everlasting chains of darkness, then he will cry out, *I am in a great strait*. Consider what *Dives* saith to *Abraham*: he desires that *Lazarus* might but dip the tip of his finger in water, and that he might cool his tongue: not his whole body, but his tongue: but that would not be granted.

It is impossible the tongue of man should set out the great straits the damned suffer in hell, both in regard of the greatness and everlastingness of them.

This is all I shall say for the Explication.

Use 1. I chiefly aim at the Application: Doth sin bring Nations and Persons into external, internal, and eternal straits? then this sadly reproves those that choose to commit sin to avoid perplexity. There are thousands in *England* guilty of this, that to avoid poverty, will lye, cheat and cozen, and to gain an estate will sell God and a good conscience: and to avoid the losse of estate and imprisonment will do any thing: they will be sure to be of that Religion which is uppermost: be it what it will. Now give me leave this morning to speak three things to these sort of men: and O that my words might prevail with them!

1. Consider it is sin only that makes trouble to deserve the name of trouble; for when we suffer for Gods sake, or a good Conscience, these troubles are so sweetned by the consolations of heaven, that they are no troubles at all: therefore in
Queen

Queen *Maries* dayes the Martyrs wrote to their friends out of prison, *If you know the Comforts we have in prison, you would wish to be with us: I am in prison before I am in prison, saith Mr. Sanders.*

Famous is the story of the three Children: they were in a great strait when cast into the fiery Furnace; Binde them hand and foot, and cast them into the Furnace; but when they were there they were unbound: *Dan. 3. 25.* saith *Nebuchadnezzar*, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? and loe I see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. I have often told you, when three are cast into the fire for a good Conscience, God will make the fourth: therefore, I say, straits and sufferings for God are not worth the name of straits. *David* was often driven into straits: *1 Sam. 30. 6.* he was sore distressed when his Town was burnt, and his Wives and Children taken captive by the *Amalekites*: but that was a distress of danger, not of sin: therefore he encourageth himself in the Lord his God. *Jehosaphat* was in a great strait, *2 Chron. 20. 12.* *We know not what to do,* saith he: this was a strait of danger, not caused by his sin, and God quickly delivered him: but the strait that *David* was in, was caused by his sin, and that made it so bitter. I am loth to enlarge here: *Saint Paul* was in a great strait, *Phil. 3. 23.* but this was a blessed strait, an Evangelical strait, saith *Saint Chrysostome*, *He knew not whether to die for his own sake, or to live for the Churches sake, were best; he was willing to adjourn*

adjourn his going to heaven for the good of the people of God : Nay Christ was in a strait, *Luke* 12. 15. I have a Baptisme to be baptized withall, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished? I am to shed my blood for my Elect : that is the Baptisme he speakes of.

This was a strait of dear affection to the elect of God : all these were blessed straits : but now a strait caused by sin, these are embittered and envenomed by the guilt of sin and sence of Gods wrath. It is sin that maketh straits deserve the name of straits : therefore you are spiritually mad that commit sin to avoid straits.

2. There is more evil in the least sin, then in the greatest outward calamity whatsoever : this the world will not believe : therefore Saint *Austin* saith, *That a man ought not to tell a lye, though he might save all the world from hell : for there is more evil in one lye, then there is good in the salvation of all the world.* I have often told you the story of Saint *Austin* : saith he, *If hell were on one side, and sin on the other, and I must choose one, I would choose hell rather then sin : for God is the Author of hell, but it is blasphemy to say he is the Author of sin.* There is a famous story of *Charles the ninth King of France*, he sent a message to the Prince of *Condya* a zealous Protestant, gives him three things to choose, either to go to *Mas*, or to be put to death, or to suffer banishment all his life long : saith he, *Primum Deo juvante nunquam eligo* : The first (God helping) I will never choose, I abhor the idolatry of the *Mas* : but for the two other, I leave it to the choice of the King to do as he pleases :

fer: there is more evil in the least sin then the greatest misery.

3. The third thing I would have you consider, that whosoever goeth out of Gods way to avoid danger, shall certainly meet with greater danger. *Balaam* went out of Gods way, *Numb. 22. 22.* and God sent an Angel with a drawn sword, and he riding upon an Asse, *verse 26.* the Angel stood in a narrow place, where was no way to go from the right hand or from the left: if his Asse had not fallen under him, he had been run through by the sword of the Angel. *Jonah* for fear of the King of *Nineveh* went out of Gods way, but he met with a mighty tempest, he met with a Whale: What do you do when you commit sin? you make way to be cast into the eternal prison of hell: you destroy your precious souls to save your perishing bodies.

Use 2. If sin be the father and mother of all perplexity and distresses, then, I beseech you, let us above all things in the world abhor sin: all the curses of the Bible are all due only to a sinner; and all the curses not named in the Bible: for that is observable, *Dent. 28. 36.* every plague that is not written in the book shall light upon him: there are strange punishments to the workers of iniquity, *Job 31. 3.* Is not destruction to the wicked a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity; sin it bringeth the sinner to little ease: little ease at death, little ease at the day of judgement, and little ease in hell, tribulation and anguish: the word in
the

The Greek is ἀπαλλοτριωσις little ease to every soul that doth iniquity. Oh my beloved, will you promise me to look upon sin, and consider it in all its woful consequents, as the father, mother, and womb out of which come external, eternal, and internal straits? more particularly there are twelve sins I especially command you to take heed of and avoid.

1. Take heed of covetousness: the love of the world will peirce you through with many sorrows; the love of money is the root of all evil; the love of the world drowns men in perdition.

2. Take heed of the sin of pride: into what woful strait did pride bring *Haman*! God crossed him in what he most desired: God made him hold the stirrup, while *Mordecai* rode in triumph; and God hanged him on the Gallows which he had made for *Mordecai*.

3. Take heed of drunkenness; look not on the wine when it gives its colour in the cup, &c. drunkenness will bring you into snares, it will bite like a Serpent, and sting like an Adder, &c.

4. Take heed of disobedience and rebellion against the Commandements of God: it brought *Jonah* to the three nights and three dayes in the Whales belly.

5. Take heed of fornication, and adultery, and all

all uncleanness; this brought *Sampson* to a woful strait: this brought *David* and *Solomon* into great perplexity.

6. Take heed of oppression, and all acts of injustice: this brought *Ahab* into great strait, insomuch that the dogs licked his blood.

7. Take heed of unnecessary familiarity with wicked men: this brought *Jehosaphat* into a great strait.

8. Take heed of misusing the Prophets of God: this made God destroy the Children of *Israel* without remedy, 2 *Cbron.* 36. 15. 16.

9. Take heed of coming prophanely to the Lords Table: this brought the Church of *Corinth* into a great distress, insomuch as the Apostle saith, *For this cause many among you are sick, and many weak, and many fallen asleep.*

10. Take heed of loathing the Manna of your souls: this brought the people of *Israel* into woful misery, that God destroyed all their carcasses in the wilderness save *Jeshua* and *Caleb*.

Take heed of slighting the Gospel: this brought *Queen Maries* persecution, as many learned and godly men that fled for Religions sake out of the Land, have confessed their unthankfulness for, and unfruitfulness under the Gospel in King *Edward* the sixths time, brought the persecution in *Queen Maries* time.

11. Take

11. Take heed of losing your first Love : that makes God threaten to take away his Candlestick.

12. Take heed of prophaning the Christian Sabbath, which is much prophaned everywhere, a day that Christ by his resurrection from the dead hath consecrated, to be kept holy to God: Certainly if the Jews were so severely punished for breaking the Sabbath, which was set apart in memory of the Creation, surely God will severely punish those that break the Sabbath set apart in memory of Christs Resurrection. Maybe some will say, I have committed many of these sins, but am not brought into any strait. Remember it was nine months after *David* had numbred the people, before he was in this strait: but as sure as God is in heaven, sin will bring straits sooner or later; though a sinner a hundred yeares, yet shall he be accursed: may be thy prosperity makes way for thy damnation: and this is thy greatest distress, that thou goest on in sin and prosperity.

Use 3. If sin bringeth a Nation into marvelous labyrinths, learn what great cause we have to fear that God should bring this Nation into great distress, because of the great abominations are committed in the midst of it: our King and Sovereign was in great strait in the dayes of his banishment, but God hath delivered him: God hath delivered this Nation out of great straits; but alas we requite God evil for good, and instead of repenting

repenting of old sins we commit new sins. I am told there are new oaths invented, oaths not fit to be named in any place, much less here: Certainly the drunkenness and adultery, the oppression and injustice, the bribery and Sabbath-breaking, the vain and wicked swearing and for-swearing this Nation is guilty of, must of necessity provoke God to say of us as he did of them in *Jeremiah* 15. 29. *Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? shall not my soul be avenged on such a Nation as this? God will not only punish us, but be avenged on us. There is no way to avoid a national desolation but by a national reformation.*

Lastly, learn what cause you of this Congregation and Parish, what cause you have to expect that God should bring you into great straits, because of your great unthankfulness and unfruitfulness under the means of Grace, you that have so long enjoyed the Gospel; you have had the Gospel in this place in great abundance; Doctor *Taylor* he served an apprenticeship in this place; Doctor *Staughton* served another apprenticeship, and I, through divine Mercy, have served three apprenticeships, and half another almost, among you; you have had the Spirit of God seven and thirty years in the faithful ministry of the Word knocking at the door of your hearts, but many of you have hardened your hearts. Are there not some of you, I only put the question, that begin to loath the Manna of your souls, and to look back towards *Egypt* again? Are there not some of you have itching ears, and would fain have Preachers
that

that wou'd feed you with dainty phrases, and begin not to care for a Minister that unrips your Consciences, speaks to your hearts and souls, and would force you into heaven by frightening you out of your sins? Are there not some of you, that by often hearing Sermons are become Sermon proof, that know to sleep and scoffe away Sermons? I would be glad to say there are but few such; but the Lord knoweth there are too too many that by long preaching get little good by preaching, inso-much that I have often said it, and say it now again, there is hardly any way to raise the price of the Gospel-ministry, but by the want of it: And that I may not flatter you, you have not profited under the means you have enjoyed; therefore you may justly expect God may bring you into a strait; and take away the Gospel from you; God may justly take away your Ministers by death or other wayes. Have you not lost your first Love? why did God take away the Gospel from the Church of Ephesus, but because they lost their first Love? Are you not like the Church of Laodicea, that are neither hot nor cold? therefore God may justly spew you out of his mouth: what God will doe with you, I know not; a few weeks will determine: God can make a great change in a little time: we leave all to God: but in the mean time let me commend one text of Scripture to you, *Jerem. 13. 16. Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it grosse darknesse: Verse 17. But if you will not hear it, my*
soul

(17)

soul shall weep in secret places for your pride, and mine eyes shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lords flock is carried away captive. Give glory to God by confessing and repenting of your sins, by humbling your souls before the Lord, before darkness come, and who knoweth but this may prevent darkness?

The End of the first Sermon.

*The end of the
first Sermon* SER-

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S E R M O N II.

2 Cor. 7. 1.

Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse our selves:



IT is the Title that I intend now, by the help of God, to insist upon, that sweet Parenthesis in the Text, *Dearly beloved*, wherein you have the Apostle breathing forth his affections unto this people: he speaks now as a Pastour, and he speaks to them of his spiritual Children. *Αγαπῶμενοι* *Dearly beloved*, where you have,

First, The title, *Beloved*.

Secondly, The exhortation to holiness, *Let us cleanse our selves*.

Thirdly, The meanes how we should be cleansed and sanctified, *Having these promises*.

It is the first of these that I intend : the title that the Apostle gives to his children, *Dearly beloved*.

From hence observe this Doctrine.

That the affections of a right Gospel-Minister towards his people are very ardent.

Dearly beloved, there are two things in every Minister of Christ that are much exercised : his head and his heart, his head with labour, and his heart with love : his head with labour in the work of the Ministry : if done aright, it is a work fitter for Angels then for Men : it is our work to open the Oracles of God, even those sacred profound things that the Angels search into: and if God did not help us, we might soon sink under the weight of such a burden : and as a Ministers head is exercised with labour, so his heart is exercised with love, & it is hard to say which of the two exceeds : his labour or his love. Thus is it here in the Text, *my dearly beloved* : in these words we have Saint Paul laying siege to these *Corinthians*, and labouring to make a happy victory, to conquer them with kindness, *dearly beloved*. Saint Pauls heart was the spring of love, his lips were the pipe, the *Corinthians* were the cistern into which this spring did run. This holy Apostle was a mirrour and pattern of love, towards the sinning *Corinthians*: Pauls tears did drop towards the praying *Corinthians*, his love did burn:
holy

holy *Paul* was a *Seraphin*, his heart did burn in a
 flame of affection to his people: how many passa-
 ges do we find scattered in his Epistles? he tells
 his people, which sometimes he did write to, and
 sometimes he preached to, he looked after their
 souls more then their silver, *2 Cor. 12. 14. We seek*
not yours but you: as a tender nurse cherisheth her
 childe with the breast, so Saint *Paul* gave his peo-
 ple the breast milk of the Word: in *1 Thess. 2. 7.*
 this man of God did not only bestow a Sermon up-
 on his people, but was willing to impart his very
 soul to them if it might save theirs, *1 Thess. 2. 8.*
We were willing to have imparted to you our own souls,
because you are dear unto us: Such was Saint *Pauls*
 affection to his people, that without a complement
 he loved them more then his life: *Phil. 2. 17.* and
if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith,
I rejoyce with you all: that is as if he had said, If it
 be so that my blood be poured forth as a sacrifice,
 if my death may be any way serviceable unto you,
 if it may help forward the strengthening and con-
 firming of your faith, I am willing to die, I rejoyce
 to do it: so full of affections was this Apostle, that
 he could not choose but love his people, though
 the more he did love, the lesse he should be lo-
 ved: In *2 Corinb. 12. 15.* oh how did *Paul* sweet-
 en all his Sermons with love: in *2 Corinb. 12.* if he
 reprov'd sin, yet he was angry in love; he dipt the
 pill in sugar, *Galat. 4. 9, 10, 11.* How turn you
 again to weak and beggarly elements! you observe
 dayes, and months, and years; I am afraid of
 you, least I have bestowed upon you labour in vain;

Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am. See how Saint *Paul* chides their sins, and yet at the same time courts their souls: no sooner did he lanch the wound, but presently he poured in wine and oyl into it: so did *Paul* love his people, that he would not justly give any offence to the weakest believer. 1 Cor. 8. 13. *If meat make my brother to offend, I will never eat flesh more whilst the world standeth.* *Paul* was like some tender mother, who forbears to eat those meats that she might, for fear of hurting the child that she gives suck to. Thus you see he was a spiritual father made up of love: and surely, my brethren, this affection in some degree is in all the true Ministers of Jesus Christ, they are full of sympathy and bowels unto those over whom the holy Ghost hath made them Overseers.

I shall only glance at the Reasons why it will be thus, and why it should be thus, that such flaming affections there should be in all Christs Ministers to their people.

It will be thus for these two Reasons briefly.

First, from that principle within that teacheth Love. Grace doth not fire the heart with passion, but with compassion. Grace in the heart of a Minister files off that ruggedness that is in his spirit, making him loving and courteous. *Paul* once breathed out persecution: but when Grace came, this bramble was turned into a spiritual Vine, twisting himself about the souls of his people with loving embraces.

Secondly, there will be this ardent love in a ministers heart, from that spiritual relation that is
betwixt

betwixt him and his people: he is a spiritual Father: and shall we think him to be without bowels! 1 Cor. 4. 15. *Though you have ten thousand instructors, yet have you not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel.* Some he begets unto Christ, others he build up in Christ. Doth not a father provide cheerfully for his children? can a father see bread taken from his child and not have his heart affected with it? is it not a grief to a parent to see his child put out to a dry nurse?

Secondly, there should be this ardent love and affection in all Gods Ministers for this reason, because this is the livelyest way to do most good; knotty and stubborn hearts will soonest be wrought upon with kindness. The fire melteth the hardest metal; the fire of love with Gods blessing will melt the most obdurate sinner. A Barnabas, a son of consolation, who comes in the spirit of love and meekness, is the fittest to do a piece of Gospel-chirurgery, to restore and put such an one in joynt again that is overtaken with a fault. Gal. 6. 1. *restore such a one with the spirit of love and meekness.* Thus much in short for the doctrinal part.

Give me leave now to make some application.

And first, here are several Inferences that may be drawn from this: As

First, see here the right character of a Gospel-Minister: He is full of love, he exhorts, he comforts, he reproveth, and all in love; he is never angry with his people, but because they will not be

saved? How loth is a Minister of Christ to see precious souls, like so many jewels, cast over-board into the dead-sea of hell? A conscientious Minister would count it an unhappy gain, to gain the world and lose the souls of his people: he saith, as the King of Sodom to Abraham, *Give me the persons and take thee the goods*, Gen. 14. 21.

The second branch of Information is this: Are true Gospel-Ministers so full of love? then how sad is it to have such Ministers put upon a people as have no love to souls? The work of the ministry, it is a labour of love: O how sad is it to have such in the ministry, that can neither labour nor love? that are such as are without bowels, that look more at tyths then at souls? It must needs be sad with a people in any part of the world to have such ministers set over them, as either poyson them with error, or do what in them lies to damn them by their wicked example: How can the Devil reprove sin? how can that Minister cry out in the Pulpit against drunkenness, that will himself be drunk? Rom. 2. 22. *Thou that teachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man ought not to commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery?* We read that the snuffers of the Tabernacle were to be made of pure gold, Exod. 37. 23. those who by their calling are to reprove and snuffe off the sins of others, they should be pure gold, holy persons. In the Law God did appoint the lip of the Leper should be covered; he ought to have his lip covered, he should not be permitted to speak the Oracles of God, who though he be by office an Angel, yet by life is a Leper.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, see from hence the happiness of a Minister who is placed among such a people as give him abundant cause of love : How happy is he that can say to his people from his heart, *Ἀγαπητοὶ* my dearly beloved ! And here let me speak by way of encouragement to you of this Parish ; I find St. Paul commending the good he saw in his people, *1 Thess. 1. 3. We are bound to thank God alwayes for you beloved, because your faith grows exceedingly.* Here Paul is commending his people : in imitation of this Apostle, let me at this time speak a commendatory word to you ; I have exercised my ministry now among you for almost sixteen years, and I rejoyce and bless God that I cannot say, The more I love you, the lesse I am loved ; I have received many signal demonstrations of love from you : though other Parishes have exceeded you for number of houses, yet I think not for strength of affection. I have with much comfort observed your reverent attention to the Word preached ; you rejoyced in this light not for a season, but to this day : I have observed your zeal against error, and as much as could be expected in a critical time, your unity and amity : this is your honour, and if for the future there should be any interruption made in my ministry among you, though I should not be permitted to preach to you, yet I shall not cease to love you, and to pray for you : but why should there be an interruption made ? where is the crime ? Some indeed say, that we are disloyal and seditious : Beloved, what my actings and sufferings for his Majesty have been, is known not to a few of you : but however we must go to heaven through good report,

report and thorough bad report: and it is well if we can get to glory, though we passe through the pikes. I shall endeavour that I may still approve the sincerity of my love to you: I will not promise that I shall still preach among you, nor will I say that I shall not; I desire to be guided by the silver thred of Gods Word, and of Gods Providence: my heart is toward you: there is, you know, an expression in the late Act, that we shall be now shortly as if we were naturally dead; and if I must die, let me leave some legacy with you before I go from you: I cannot but give you some counsel and advice for your souls, and I hope there is no hurt in that: There are, my beloved, these twenty directions, that I desire you to take special notice of, which I would leave as advice and counsel with you about your souls.

First, I beseech you, keep your constant houres every day with God: the godly man is a man set apart, *Psal. 4. 3.* not only because God hath set him apart by election, but because he hath set himself apart by devotion. Give God the *Aurora filium*, begin the day with God, visit God in the morning before you make any other visits: wind up your hearts towards heaven in the morning, and they will go the better all the day after. O turn your Closets into Temples: read the Scriptures: the two Testaments are the two lips by which God speaks to us; these will make you wise unto salvation: the Scripture is both a glass to shew you your spots, and a laver to wash them away: besiege heaven every day with prayer: thus perfume your houses, and keep a constant intercourse with heaven.

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Secondly, get good books into your houses: when you have not the spring near to you, then get water into your cistern; so when you have not that wholesome preaching that you desire, good books are cisterns that hold the waters of life, in them to refresh you. When *Dauids* natural heat was taken away, they covered him with warm clothes, *1 Kings* 1. so when you find a chilness upon your souls, and that your former heat begins to abate, ply your selves with warm clothes; get those good books that may acquaint you with such truths as may warm and affect your hearts.

Thirdly, have a care of your company: take heed of unnecessary familiarity with sinners: we cannot catch health from another, but we may soon catch a disease: the disease of sin is very catching: I would be as afraid of coming among the wicked, as among those that have the plague. *Psal.* 106. 35. *They were mingled with the heathen and learned their works*: if we cannot make others better, let us have a care that they make not us worse. Lot was a miracle, he kept fresh in *Sodom's* salt-water. My beloved, take heed of the occasions of sin: evil company is an occasion of sin. The *Nazarites* in the old Law, as they might drink no wine, so they were forbidden grapes, whereof the wine was made, as you read in *Numb.* 6. to teach us, that all occasions of sin must be avoided: evil company is, *bellua animarum*, the Devils draw-net, by which he draws millions to hell: How many families and how many souls have been ruined and undone in this City by evil company? many there are that go from a Play-house to a Whore-house, and from a Tavern to Tyburn.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, have a care whom you hear; it is our Saviour Christs counsel, *Matth. 7. 15. Beware of false Prophets, that come to you in sheeps cloathing, but inwardly are ravening wolves.* Let me tell you, the Devil hath his Ministers as well as Christ: *Rev. 12. 15. The Serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman:* that is, as the Learned expound it, Satan by his Ministers and Emissaries cast out the flood of *Arrian* doctrine to drown the Church. There are some, who by the subtilty of their wit have learned the Art to mix error with truth, and to give poyson in a golden cup. Take heed who you hear, and how you hear; belike those noble *Bereans*, that searched the Scriptures whether the things that they preached were so or not, *Acts 17. 11.* Your ears must not be like sponges that suck in puddle-water as well as wine; but your ears must be like a fan, that fans out the chaffe, but retains the pure wheat: you must be like those in the Parable, *Matth. 13. 48.* that gathered the good fish into vessels, but cast the bad away. The Saints are called Virgins for their wisdom: they will not let every one defile their souls with error; they have a judicious ear, and a critical palate, that can distinguish betwixt truth and error, and put a difference betwixt meat of Gods sending, and the Devils cooking.

Fifthly, study sincerity, *Psal. 51. 6. Behold thou desirest truth in the inward part:* be what you seem to be; be not like Rowers in a Barge, that look one way and row another: Do not look heaven-ward by your profession, and row hell-ward by your conversation: do not pretend to love God, and yet
love

love sin : *Simulata sanctitas, duplicata iniquitas* : Counterfeit piety is double iniquity. Let your hearts be upright with God : the plainer the Diamond is, the richer it is ; and the more plain the heart is, the more doth God value this jewel : A little rusty gold is far better then a great deal of bright brass : a little true Grace, though rusted over with many infirmities, is better then all the glistering shews of hypocrites : a sincere heart is Gods currant coin, and he will give it grains of allowance.

Sixthly, as you love your souls, be not strangers to your selves ; be much and often in the work of self-examination ; among all the books that you read, turn over the book of your own heart ; look into the book of conscience, see what is written there : *Psal. 77. 6. I commune with mine own heart* : Set up a judgement seat in your own souls ; examine whether you have Grace or not : prove whether you are in the faith : be as much afraid of a painted holiness as you would be afraid of going to a painted heaven : Do not think your selves good, because others think so : let the Word be the touch-stone, by which you try your hearts : let the Word be the looking-glass, by which you judge of the complexion of your souls : for want of this self-searching many live known to others, and die unknown to themselves.

Seventhly, keep your spiritual watch, *Mat. 13. 37* what I say unto you I say unto all, watch : if it were the last word I should speak, it should be this word, watch. O what need hath a Christian to be ever upon his watch ! the heart is a subtle piece, and will be

be stealing out to vanity, and if we are not careful it will decoy us into sin: we have a special eye upon such persons as we suspect: thy heart is a suspicious person: O have an eye upon it, watch it continually: it is a bosome traytor. *Job* set a watch before his eyes, *Job* 31. 1. We must every day keep sentinel: sleep not upon your guard: our sleeping time is the Devils tempting time: let not your watch candle go out.

Eighthly, you that are the people of God, do you often associate together. *Mal.* 3. 16. they that feared the Lord, spake often one to another. Christs Doves should flock together: one Christian will help to heat another: a single coal of Juniper will soon die, but many coals put together will keep life one in another. Conference sometimes may do as much good as preaching: one Christian by good discourse drops holy oyl upon another, that makes the lamp of his grace to shine the brighter. It is great wisdom to keep up the trade in a Corporation. Christians by meeting often together, setting good discourse on foot, keep up the trade of godliness, that else would decay & soon be lost. Is not the communion of Saints an Article in our Creed? Do not then live so alunder, as if this Article were blotted out. The Naturalists observe there is a sympathy in Plants; they say some Plants bear better when they grow near other Plants, as the Vine and the Elme, the Olive and the Myrtle thrive best when they grow together: it is true in Religion, the Saints are trees of righteousness, that thrive best in godliness when they grow together.

Ninthly, get your hearts screwed up above the world;

world : set your affections upon things above, *Col.* 3.3. We may see the face of the Moon in the water, but the Moon is fixed above in the Firmament : so though a Christian walks here below , yet his heart should be fixed above in heaven : in heaven there is our best kindred, our purest joy, our Mansion-house ; O let our hearts be above : it is the best and the sweetest kind of life : the higher the bird flies, the sweeter it sings : and the higher the heart is raised above the world, the sweeter joy it hath. The Eagle that flies in the air, is not stung by the Serpent : those whose hearts are elevated above the lower Region of this world, are not stung with the vexations and disquietments that others are, but are full of joy and contentment.

10. Trade much in the promises : the promises are great supports to faith; faith lives in a promise as the fish lives in the water: the promises are both comforting and quickening: they are *matralia evangelii*, the very breasts of the Gospel : as the child by sucking the breasts gets strength; so faith by sucking the breast of a promise gets strength and revives. The Promises of God are bladders to keep us from sinking when we come into the waters of affliction : the promises are sweet clusters of grapes that grow upon Christ the true Vine. O trade much in the promises : there is no condition that you can be in, but you have a promise: the promises are like Manna, that sute themselves to every Christians palate.

11. To all you that hear me , live in a calling. *Jerome* gave his friend this advice to be everwell employed, that when the Devil came to tempt him,

him, he might find him working in his vineyard; Sure I am, the same God that saith, *Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy*, saith also, *Six dayes shalt thou labour*. The great God never sealed any war-rants to idleness: an idle professour is the shame of his profession; 2 *Thess.* 3. 11. *I hear there are some*, sayes the Apostle, *that work not at all, but are busie-bodies: such we exhort, by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work*. Solon made Laws to punish idleness; and Cicero saith of an idle man, *Spiritus trahit, non vivit*, he draws his breath, but doth not live, he is not useful: but a good Christian acts within the sphere of his own calling.

12. Let me intreat you to joyn the first and the second Table together: piety to God, and equity to your neighbour: the Apostle puts these two words together in one verse, *δικαιοσύνη καὶ ἀγάπη* *Titus* 2. 12. *That we should live righteously and godly*: righteously, that relates to morality; godly, that relates to piety and sanctity: alwayes remember this, every Command hath the same divine stamp and authority as another Command hath. I would try a moral man by the duties of the first Table, and I would try a professor by the duties of the second Table: Some pretend faith, but have no works; others have works, but they have no faith: Some pretend zeal for God, but are not just in their dealings; others are just in their dealings, but have not one spark of zeal for God. If you would go to heaven, you must turn both sides of the Table, the first and second table, joyn piety and morality together: as we blame the Papists for blotting out the second Commandment, let not the Papists blame us for leaving out the second Table. Thi-

13. Joyn the Serpent and the Dove together; innocency and prudence, *Mat. 10. 16. Be wise as Serpents, and harmlesse as Doves.* We must have innocency with our wisdom, else our wisdom is but craftinesse; and we must have wisdom with our innocency, else our innocency is but weaknesse: We must have the harmlesse of the Dove, that we may not wrong others; and we must have the prudence of the Serpent, that others may not abuse and circumvent us; not to wrong the truth by silence; here is the innocency of the Dove; not to betray our selves by rashnesse, here's the wisdom of the Serpent: how happy is it where these two are united, the Dove and the Serpent! the Dove without the Serpent is folly, and the Serpent without the Dove is impiety.

14. Be more afraid of sin then of suffering: A man may be afflicted, and yet have the love of God; but he cannot sin, but presently God is angry; sin eclipses the light of Gods countenance; in suffering the conscience may be quiet. When the hail beats upon the tiles, there may be musick in the house; and when there is suffering in the body, there may be peace and musick in the conscience; but when a man sins wilfully and presumptuously, he loseth all his peace. *Spira* abjured his faith, and he became a terrour to himself, he could not endure himself; he professed he thought *Cain* and *Judas* in hell did not feel those terrours and horrors that he felt. He that will commit sin to prevent suffering, is like a man that lets his head be wounded, to save his shield and his helmet.

15. Take heed of Idolatry: In *1 Ioh. 5. 21. Little children, keep your selves from Idols.* Idolatry is an image of jealousie to provoke God; it breaks the ma-

riage-knot asunder, and makes the Lord disclaim his interest in a people; what kind of Religion is Popery? it is the Mother of many Monsters. What Soul-damning doctrines do it hold forth, as the meriting of salvation by good works, the giving of pardons, the worshipping of Angels, Popish indulgencies, Purgatorie, and the like? it is a Soul-damning Religion, it is the breeder of Ignorance, Uncleanneſs and Murder: the Popish Religion is not defended by strength of Argument, but by force of Arms; keep your selves from Idols, and take heed of Superſtition, that is the Gentleman-uſher to Popery.

16. Think not the worſe of Godlineſs becauſe it is reproached and perſecuted; wicked men being ſtirred up by the Devil, do maliciously reproach the wayes of God; ſuch were *Iulian* and *Lucian*: though wicked men, would be godly on their Death beds, yet in the time of their life they revile and hate godlyneſs; but think not you the worſe of Religion becauſe it is reproached by the Wicked. Suppose a Virgin ſhould be reproached for her Chſtitie, yet Chſtitie is never the: if a worſe blind man jeer the Sun, the Sun is never the leſs bright. Holyness is a beautifull and glorious thing; it is the Angels glory, and ſhall we be aſhamed of that which makes us like the Angels? There is a time comming when wicked men would be glad of ſome of that Holyness that now they deſpiſe, but they ſhall be as far then from obtaining it, as they are now from deſiring it.

17. Think not the better of Sinne becauſe it is in faſhion; think not the better of Impietie and Ungodlineſs becauſe moſt walk in thoſe crooked Wayes. Multitude is a ſcooliſh Argument; Multitude doth not argue the goodneſs of a thing; the Devil's name is Legion, that ſignifieth a multitude. Hell-road is this day full of Travellers; eſteem not the better of Sinne be-
cause

cause most go this Way; do we think the better of the Plague because it is common? The plea of a Multitude will not hold at Gods barre; when God shall ask you, Why did you prophane my Sabbath, why were you drunk, why did you break your Oathes? to say then, Lord, Because most men did so, will be but a poor plea; God will say to you, Then seeing you have sinned with the multitude, you shall now go to Hell with the multitude. I beseech you as you tender your Souls, walk Antipodes to the corruptions of the Times; if you are living Fish, swimme against the Streame; dead Fish swimme down the Streame. *Ephes. 5. 11. Have no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*

18. In the business of Religion serve God with all your might. *Eccles. 9. 10. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thymight, for there is no work or device in the grave whither thou goest.* This is an Argument why we should do all we can for God, serve him with all our strength, because the Grave is very near, and there is no praying, no repenting in the Grave; our time is but small, and therefore our zeal for God should be great. *David* danced with all his might before the Arke, and so should we act vigorously for God in the sphere of Obedience. *Rom. 12.*

12. *servent in spirit serving the Lord.* Take heed of a dull lazy temper in Gods service; you must not only say a Prayer, or read a Prayer, but you must pour out your Soul in Prayer; not only love God, but be sick of love to God. God in the Old Law would have the Coales put to the Incense, *Levit. 16. 13.* and why so? to typifie that the Heart must be inflamed in the worship of God, your Prayers must go up with a flame of Devotion. I confess Hell will be taken with-

out a storm, you may jump into Hell with ease; but it is all up hill to Heaven, and therefore you must put forth all your might. *Mat. 12. 11. The violent take heaven by force.* Heaven is not taken but by storm: do you not see men zealous and very active for the Devil, and for their Lusts? and shall they take pains for Hell, and will not you take pains for Heaven?

19. Do all the good you can while you live to others. God hath made every Creature usefull for us; the Sunne hath not its light for it self, but for us; the Fountain runs freely, and so does the myrrhe drop from the Tree; everie Creature doth as it were deny it self for us; the Beast gives us its labour, the Bird gives us its musick, and the Silk-worm its filke: Now hath God made everie thing usefull for us, and shall not we be usefull one for the good of another? O labour to be helpfull to the Souls of others, and to supply the wants of others: Jesus Christ was a publick Blessing in the World, he went about doing good; we are all Members of the Bodie politick, nay, are we not Members of the Body mysticall, and shall not every Member be helpfull for the good of the Bodie? that is a dead Member that doth not communicate to the good of the Bodie. O labour to be usefull to others while you live, that so when you die there may be a miss of you; many live so unfruitfully, that truly their Life is scarce worth a prayer, nor their Death scarce worth a tear.

20. Everie day spend some thoughts upon Eternitie. O Eternitie, Eternitie! all of us here are ere long, it may be some of us within a few daies or hours, to lanch forth into the Ocean of Eternitie. Eternitie is *status interminabilis*, sayes Boetius; no Prospective-glass can see

see to the end of Eternitie. Eternitie is a summe that can never be numbered, a Line that can never be measured; Eternitie is a Condition of everlasting miserie or everlasting happines; if you are godly, then shall you be for ever happie, you shall be alwaies sunning your selves in the light of Gods countenance; if you are wicked, you shall be alwaies miserable, ever lying in the scalding Furnace of the wrath of the Almighty. Eternitie to the Godlie is a day that hath no sun-setting; Eternitie to the Wicked is a night that hath no sun-rising. O I beseech you my Brethren, everie day spend some time upon the thoughts of Eternitie. The serious thoughts of an eternal Condition would be a great means to promote Holiness.

1. The thoughts of Eternitie would make us verie serious about our Souls. O my Soul, thou art shortlie to flie into Eternitie, a Condition that can never be reversed or altered; how serious would this make us about our Heaven-born Souls! *Zeuxes* being once asked why he was so long in drawing a Picture, answered, *aternitati pingo*, I am now painting for Eternitie. Oh how ferventlie would that man pray that thinks he is praying for Eternitie! Oh how accuratelie and circum-spectlie would that man live that thinks upon this moment hangs eternitie!

2. The thoughts of Eternitie would make us sleight and contemn all the things of this World. What is the World to him that hath Eternitie alwaies in his Eye? Did we think seriousslie and solemnlie of Eternitie. we should never over-value the Comforts of the World, nor over-grieve the Crosses of the World.

1. We should not over-value the Comforts of the World. Worldly comforts are very sweet, but they are very swift, they are soon gone; the pleasures of the World are but for a season; just like *Noah's Dove* that brought an Olive branch in her Mouth, but she had Wings, and so did presentlie flie from the Ark; so are all outward Comforts, they bring an Olive-branch, but they have Wings too, with which they flie away.

2. The thoughts of Eternitie would make us not to over-grieve the Crosses and Sufferings of the World. What are these Sufferings to Eternitie? our Sufferings, says the Apostle, are but for *a while*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 10. What are all the Sufferings we can undergo in the World to Eternity? Affliction may be lasting, but it is not everlasting. Our Sufferings here are not worhie to be compared to an eternal weight of Glorie.

And thus my Beloved, I have given you these Twenty Directions for your precious Soules: I beseech you treasure them up as so many Jewels in the Cabinet of your Breast: Did you carrie these Directions about you, they would be a most excellent Amidore to keep you from Sinne, and an excellent meares to preserve the zeal of Pietie flaming upon the Altar of your Hearts.

I have

I have manie things yet to say to you; but I know not whether God will give me another Opportunitie; my strength is now almost gone; I beseech you, let these things which I have spoken make deep impressions upon all your Souls. Consider what hath been said, and the Lord give you Understanding in all things.

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SER-





SERMON III.

I JOHN 5. 1. & 21.

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begate, loveth him also that is begotten of him. Little Children, keep your selves from Idols.

THis General Doctrine I have already delivered unto you from this Text, which indeed is the marrow and substance of the whole Chapter, That Gospel believing is a Dutie, which they that really perform are highly privi'dged by to their greatest Advantage;

rage : I have spoken concerning Gospel believing, and that it is a duty, and that they that do really perform it are highly dignified and priviledged by it, as hath been made to appear from the Chapter ; that which remains to be done, and shall be, as God enables the work of this morning, is, to make improvement of this Doctrine, which is one of the most material and momentous Doctrines that can be preached to us. Gospel believing it hath most precious priviledges entailed upon it; whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, that Jesus is the Sonne of God, that Jesus is come in the Flesh, is born of God, knows God, and shall be eternally blessed of God, and with God; surely then the World runs upon a verie great mistake. I have hinted something alreadie to that purpose, but I have left the more full discussion and discovery of the matter untill now. Why, who is there among the generality of Common professors that is not very pregnant to hold forth this to be their Faith? if so be that it should be put to the Question, Friend, what is your Faith, what Belief are you of? why not one of a thousand I think but will be apt to say, Why truly I will give you this Account, There is a Gospel which is preached among us, and in the World, and this Gospel doth hold forth this for true Doctrine, that Jesus the Son of *Mary*, that was born at *Bethlehem*, is the Christ, is the Messiah which was promised by the Father, and which the World did live in expectation of so long; this Jesus I believe is the Son of God, this Jesus I verily believe is come in the Flesh, and he is come to be the Saviour of the World; this is the Belief, and that which is the common profession that is made by the generalitie of people, Why but will you consider

consider now this Text, and other Scriptures do speak fullie to this purpose, Whosoever doth believe this, that Jesus is the Christ, the Sonne of God, and that he is come in the Flesh, whosoever believes this is of God, is born of God. And it doth clearly appear, and may be most convincingly made out, that many thousands that profess their belief concerning these things, yet notwithstanding are not born of God. Why certainly there must needs be a great and grosse fallacie in the business; Gospel-faith and believing, it is not so common a thing as manie take it to be; and therefore if this be Gospel-faith and that which doth interest Persons in such great and precious priviledges, truly it concerns us to look well to it, that we be not mistaken concerning this Belief. Now this I would say there is something in it to be considered with respect to the time wherein Christ appeared visible to the World, and the after-times wherein the Apostles did hold forth these great Doctrines of the Gospel concerning Christ. And this we are to say, that in such a time as that was when this was the Critical point as it were, the discriminating thing, in such a time for any to make this profession, and to hold forth this to be their Faith, and Belief, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, it was of high signification, and might very well, as to man, beget a comfortable confidence and hope concerning such persons, that certainly they were born of God, as to man, and according to rational Charity it might be very comfortable that such Persons as did thus believe, and professe this to be their Faith and Belief, there were some blessed beam upon their Souls; for mark you, it hath been thus in the World, and a-

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among the people of it concerning matters of God and Godliness, that there hath been such and such a Truth, that hath been the Critical truth, as I said, that hath been, as I may so say, the *Shiboleth* whereby people were distinguished one from another. I allude to that passage in *Judges* concerning the *Gileadites*; they made a profession of themselves to be such and such, and they were put to it to pronounce *Shiboleth*; they that could not speak out the word and clearly pronounce it, they were not judged to be the persons that they professed themselves to be; but they that could do it, held their liberty: so sometimes such and such a Doctrine is ordered out to be a distinguishing point, upon the account of the desperate opposition that the World makes against it; and upon this Account the Priests and the Rulers, and the rest of the World were desperately bent against Jesus; they called him Jesus, but could not endure him to be called Christ the Sonne of God; it was an Act and Decree amongst them, That whosoever should confesse Jesus to be the Christ, should be put out of the Synagogue, should be excommunicated. Now for persons at such a time, wherein it was as much as their Libertie, it may be their Lives were worth, to own that Jesus Christ was the Sonne of God, for persons now at such a time to own this Jesus, that was in so mean a Condition, to be the Christ, there is very much in it, infinitely more than for persons now to take up this profession. Why? because this Doctrine hath obtained in the World, and it is a Doctrine among Papists as well as Protestants; there is no such danger now for Persons to be of this Belief. But shall I say this, That for all that to believe this really according to the right account, and
true

true genuine interpretation of Gospel-believing; the Case is the same with them and with us at this day, setting aside the consideration of times and time; the danger then, and the encouragement now; the Case is the same; Gospel-believing of these truths according to a genuine interpretation of Gospel-believing, it is the same now as then, and then as now: And therefore we must consider and look further.

I would put these few things to your consciences: You professe this to be your faith, you beleeve that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, that he is come in the flesh; these things you professe to beleeve, and if you do so indeed, you are highly privileged people, blessed of God, and shall be to all Eternity; but do you not mistake? Do you beleeve this that Jesus is the Christ? How came you by this beleeve? What account can you give of it? How were you brought over to this Beleeve? Did you not come to this Faith and Beleeve by common report? You were born to this Doctrine: You look upon it as that which is the benefit you have by your being born in a Nation and among a People that professe the Name of Christ, and this hath been instilled into you by education, and upon this account you take it: Did you ever buy this truth? It is a truth that Jesus is the Christ; how came it to be yours? Did you ever buy this truth? Buy it? I say buy it? For the very truth is, we are never able to make out a good Title to any Gospel truth, until such times as we can say we have bought it: How? Why, by serious meditation. studying the Scriptures, searching into them seriously, pondering and weighing of them, crying mightily to God, that he would manifest them to us, and encountering temptations from
without

without ; from within ; being at a point willing to engage liberty and estate, and life, and all for this truths sake : Can you say, We have pondered, and are so fully satisfied about it, as that if all the world should come in a way of contradiction, and rise up in opposition to us, and come with fire and Sword to bear us out of this truth ; yet we are resolved to stick to it ? Can you give such an account of your selves, that you have not taken it up upon a common report, but are able to say there hath been an inward Revelation made of these things to your souls, that there hath been a sanctified work of the Spirit upon your understandings, that you come to see into the mystery of these Gospel testimonies ? Is there an habitual frame of Spirit wrought in you, whereby you are carried out to cleave with every truth of God, and to close with it upon this account, because of a divine authority stamped upon it ? when we give assent to common truths, but not with a common spirit, but in the strength of a inward conviction, we assent to it upon the account of an unction that we have received from the holy one ; and we assent to this and that truth upon the account of a divine authority which we see to be stamped upon it, and withal we find that there are suitable workings of our heart in the loves and desires and delights of them to these truths (as there will be a kindly working of the heart where there is a right assent suitable to the truths assented to) as if there be a threatening, the Soul assents to it, and will tremble before God : If a promise be made, or a Gospel revelation, it will be accompanied with a holy Rejoycing in God, that ever he should make such a promise or Revelation ; and then there will be a holy resolution of
 Spirit,

Spirit; Come what will come, I will never part with this truth; I have bought the truth, that was my duty; and having bought it, I will never sell it; that is my duty too; can we give such an account as this? but then withal let me a little further improve that which I have already spoken from the Chapter.

You say this is your belief, That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; but can you give an account of those priviledges that are entailed upon this beleeif? for you must know that the priviledges which belong to such, will serve as evidences that they are such.

Now if you beleeve, it is your priviledge to be born of God; and this being born of God must be the evidence of this beleeif. Can you give an account of your being born of God? If you are not born of God, you do not beleeve, That Jesus is the Christ. Can you give an account of your overcoming the World? Are you such as are enabled to stand out in opposition to the errors and heresies and corrupt doctrines and practices that are in the world? Can you bear up against the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life? If you are in slavery to the world, in bondage to the beggerly rudiments in the world, you are mistaken, That Jesus is the Christ: For he that beleeveth according to a true interpretation of Gospel-beleeving, That Jesus is the Christ, doth overcome the world, and by vertue of this beleeif he is enabled to get a conquest over the world and over the corruptions that are in it through lust.

And

And then again, You professe to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Sonne of God : Oh ! but are you able to give an account that you have believed into this Jesus, and upon this Jesus ? for that is it the Text holds forth ; He that believes that Jesus is the Christ, doth believe on Jesus the Christ ; Are you by vertue of this believing which you professe, drawn out to a closing with Christ ? do you roll your selves upon him ? own him for Righteousnesse and Salvation, and are willing to yield your selves up in subjection to him ? You believe Jesus to be the Christ ; but do you believe on that Jesus whom you profess to be the Christ ? Now this being thus laid down as a Foundation, I would inferre thus, and so go on to a farther branch of this Application ; Either you do really believe with a Gospel-believing these Truths and Doctrines concerning Christ, or you do not ; Why, they that do professe they do, but in truth they do not, there is a clear and manifest contradiction which this profession meets withall, and that upon the accounts I have formerly given, as alasse this Profession suffers contradiction generally ; generally the Professors of this Faith, that Jesus is the Christ, do clearly make a flat contradiction ; and I am very confident that there are thousands, that if they should be put to the Tryal, Will you stick to this Truth ? if you do, it shall cost you the losse of your Liberty, and Estates, nay your Life shall go for it. Oh ! I am very apt to think, that you shall have thousands that will turn their backs upon this Profession, renounce this Profession. Now concerning such this I would say.

First,

First; that the Condition of such persons as are not right in Gospel-believing is a most mournfull and miserable Condition; however it may be with them in other respects, yet it is sad to think what a Condition they are in; for consider first of all, they that do not perform this great Dutie of Gospel believing according to the truth and reality of it, I will tell you what they do, they do give God the lye, they do by interpretation tell God to his face, that he is a very Liar; and what higher blaspheming can there be than to give the lye to the God of Truth! everie one will be apt to blesse themselves, and say, Oh far be it from me, God forbid that I should be charged with such a horrid Impietie as this! Oh but Brethren, the verie truth is, it is a very common thing by interpretation to give the lye to God; and all that do not believe according to that Gospel-believing that you have heard, doe tell God to his face that he is a Lyar. How doth that appear? Why take a little help, such as I am able to give you; to profess that Jesus is the Christ, the Sonne of God, that he came to be the Saviour of the World, is ordered out to be our Righteousnesse, is sent of God to preach Libertie to Captives, to heal diseased Soules; and to deliver poor Creatures from the bondage of the Devil; these things People generally professe to believe; but mark you now, they never come to Christ, nor never set in with him upon this account, and to this purpose, Oh Lord thou art the Jesus, the Anointed of God; I come to thee for life, I am a poor dead Creature, I am in a state of Unrighteousnesse, and thou art given to be for Righteousnesse; Lord I fly to thee for it, I am a poor diseased Creature; the Plague is upon my Soul, and thou art appointed to heal

the Soul of the Plague; I come to thee for healing. There is not One of Thousands that come thus to Christ. Will you now see how the lye is given to God? I professe for my part, saith one, I know no such matter; Jesus is the Christ, and I professe to believe so, and he is appointed of God for such and such things; he is sent to preach Liberty to the Captives; I know not that there is any such Bondage. Christ came to save Sinners; alas I know no need of any such Salvation by him; he came to heal diseased Souls; I am well enough, what need have I of Christ? what is this but to give the lye to God? He that receives not Christ, makes God a lyar; for he doth in effect say, Lord thou sayest so and so concerning the World; I know nothing of all this; and so the lye is given to God; And is it nothing to give the lye to the great GOD, the GOD of Truth? And I tell you while you professe this Jesus to be the Christ, the Sonne of God, and in the mean time fly not to him; you believe him to be the Sonne of God, and that all Authoritie is given unto him, and you will not subject to his Authority, why you give the lye to God, and is this nothing?

2. Consider the sad Condition of such as believe not according to a right Gospel-believing; they are such as are lyable to the dreadfullest touches from the Devil that possibly can be; He that believeth, is born of God, overcomes the World, and is enabled to keep himself, that the wicked one doth not touch him with a mortiferous touch; but I tell thee whatever thou art, that art under the power of Unbelief, thou art in danger of a dreadfull touch from the Prince of Darkness; and if thou livest and diest in a state of Unbelief.

Kief, thou wilt fall under the power of Condemnation. I remember what our Saviour speaks, and consider well of it; *You stand out in opposition to my Doctrine; but I tell you, Except you believe that I am he, you shall dye in your Sinnes; a dreadfull word, you shall dye in your sinnes, and what then? be damned eternally;* this is the Condition of all such as are in a state of Unbelief: but then on the other hand, in case we be able to give a good account of our Believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Sonne of God, and of our believing on him concerning whom these Testimonies are given, Oh what cause have all such to rejoyce in their condition! the condition of such Persons is happy beyond all expression and comprehension, that have owned these Truths, owned that Jesus of whom these faithfull Testimonies are given.

Now all the Chapter, according to the account I have given you, comes in to the purpose of comforting and rejoycing the hearts of such Persons. Here is your Comfort now; really believing according to a right interpretation of Gospel-believing, this is your priviledge, you are the Persons that are born from above, you are the Persons that shall be enabled to overcome the World, to bear up against all Opposition that Men and Devils can make against you; you are the Persons that have the Witnesse within you, and you shall be able to bear up against all the contradictions of Sinners; you are the Persons that have Christ, and have eternal life by him; you shall have it, nay you have it already; *He that believeth on the Sonne of God, hath eternal life;* he hath it in the beginnings of it, and shall have it in the compleat state of it; being brought over to Gospel believing, you may come

with boldnesse to God in a way of prayer, with holy confidence that whatever else you ask beleaving, you shall have a good account of it; God doth not neglect any beleaving prayer of a beleaving soul: And all the priviledges of the Gospel are entailed upon you, and you are entituled unto them, and you shall have the benefit of them while you live, and when you die unto all Eternity; well may it be said of such a person, Blessed is he and she that hath beleaved with a Gospel-beleaving Gospel-Truths and Testimonies concerning Christ, and on Christ, on whom those Testimonies are given; for there shall be a full and perfect accomplishment of what ever God hath spoken with his mouth concerning such.

And then lastly, If the grace of God hath brought us over to a closing with Christ, of whom these truths and testimonies are given; why, the last branch of the Application is but this, That you would but justify your beleaving, and labour to manifest the reality of your beleaving, according to the Gospel, by a suitable walking; this is that that shall be the closing up of this Application.

Oh brethren, Let us consider well, our Saviour tells us in *Mat. 11. Wisdom is justified of her Children.* Why, if ever we mean to approve our selves to be Wises Children, our care must be for to give in our justification of Wises sayings, and for to carry it in a congruousnesse and suitablenesse unto that Gospel-beleaving which we professe to be by grace brought over to. Why, but what is that you will say? Why consider the Text, and see what remains of the Chapter. I shall make it out, give it up to you in this way:

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Why, First of 'all this is one special duty that lies upon you, That you would study your mercy, and know what God hath been to you, and done for you, and how highly you are dignified, and not to be alwayes in a fluctuating state; and upon the questioning and disputing point; but to come to some well grounded confidence; that you may be able to say We know that this and that is our condition, and this and that is our dignified priviledg that we are planted under.

Do but mark how the point in hand doth charge this upon us in the 13th. verse of this Chapter, *These things have I writ to you that beleeve on the Name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have Eternal Life.* Here is your duty according to what the Text it self doth charge upon you; if you be such as by grace are brought over to a Gospel-beleeving, the Apostle *John* that did write this Epistle, and I from it, preach unto you in the Name of the Lord, and by authority from him, that this is your duty, to know that you are persons that have Eternal Life, that you are such as Christ by his blood hath made a purchase of Eternal Life for; that he hath by his blood once for all entred into the holy place, that is not made with hands, that he might prepare for you, and that you might have the possession of those blessed mansions that he hath made preparation of.

Eternal Life it is yours, and you may be bold to claim it, and you are bound to hope and rejoyce in the expectation of the full enjoyment of it, and not to be alwayes upon the question, and disputing point,

but to go on with a holy confidence towards God , according to what the Apostle expresses , 1 Cor. 2. *We know that when this Earthly Tabernacle shall be dissolved , we shall have a house not made with hands, &c.*

But then , a second thing that I have to charge upon you is this , That you would acknowledge with all thankfulness and enlargedness of heart , to God the riches of his mercy , and grace to you , that hath been pleased to cull you out of an unbelieving world , and bring you over to the Gospel, and to the participations that are by Christ , according to the Gospel : Oh ! This you should set your hearts upon , by admiring the riches of Gods grace ; and say , Lord, Why should'st thou manifest thy self to me , and not to the world ! That many thousands should live and die in the total ignorance of Christ , and the Gospel-mysteries , or else live and die in an empty profession ; and yet that God should be pleased to pitch upon me ! This is that that the Text doth hint unto us in *verse 19.* of this Chapter. Oh ! saith he in a triumphing manner, *We know that we are of God , and that the whole world lies in wickedness* : Oh ! our mercies and the riches of grace that hath appeared to us , while the whole world that lies in wickedness , is put into the malignant one , lies in the devil , for he is the malignant evil one , while the whole world lies in the devil in malignity ! Oh ! It is a sad condition infinitely more sad then for a man to lie in the most noisome stinking ditch , or in the loathsome kennel ; why this is that that heightens the mercy to poor souls that are called by grace according to the purpose of God ,
that

that while the whole world lies in wickednesse, and so are like to lie; yea, and to lie in hell to all Eternity, that God should please to lay you in the bosom of his Son, and to take you into the arms of his mercy; this is that that should heighten our thankfulness. I may make use of that expression which we find in *Acts 4.* when *Paul* and *Barnabas* came unto a company of Heathens, and they saw what great things were done by them, and took notice of the gracious spirit that they discovered, sure say they, *The Gods are come among us in the likenesse of men.* Considering the state of times, and what a height of wickednesse many at this day are grown up unto, the dreadful swearing, blaspheming of God and his ways: truly judge of it your selves, whether we may not say the devils are come among us in the likenesse of men. VVhy now oh! How should we heighten our love and thankfulness to God, that should please in free grace to bring us over to close with Iesus Christ!

But then fourthly, as many as are brought over to Gospel-believing, this is your duty to study, and endeavour what you can your advantages in faith; and so the Apostle gives it in charge here in the Chapter in verse 13. *These things have I writ to you that beleeve on the Name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may beleeve on the Son of God.* This is that you should set about. If God hath brought you over to a closing with Christ, and an embracing of the testimonies concerning him, beleeve more and more, labour for your advancement, and let it be your prayer, *Good Lord increase our faith:* Labour that you may be clear in

your apprehensions of Gospel mysteries; and that you may be more strong in your adherence to Christ, of whom those Gospel testimonies are given, and that you may not onely come to have an adhering faith, but to an assuring faith; that you may not be like waves tossed and tumbled up and down; but that you may come to be rooted and established, and grounded in your faith; that you may not come to be unsettled by heresie, corrupt Doctrines, or the Apostacy of others, but that you may be stedfast and unmoveable.

Yet further fifthly, This is to be given in charge to such as do believe according to the Gospel, that they carry it suitably to a believing state, as in those particulars that I have insisted upon, so in a deportment congruous and suitable to the priviledges which belong to believing: You are born of God; carry it as men and women that are so indeed: What! Born of God, the Sons and Daughters of God! What! and not live according to God? and not study conformity to God? I remember what he speaks there concerning *Amnon*, *How is it that thou being the Kings Son, art lean from day to day?* How is it that we that professe to be the Sons and Daughters of God, are lean and lank, not more improved? that we do not shew forth God and expresse Christ? This lies in the beginning of the Chapter, *If you be born of God, remember that you be born of him that is the God of Love;* And therefore you are to manifest this birth and your believing, and your being born of God, by loving God, and by loving them that are born of God; *He that beleeveth is born of God; and he that loveth*

loveth him that begat ; loveth him that is begotten of him. The God of Love doth beget a People of Love; a loving God, a loving People; And this is that that you should expresse your Believing by, and your Adoption by; by the Love you bear to God, and the Children of God.

A hatefull spitefull spirit, where it doth discover it self, speaks those persons not to be born of God, but of the Devil; carry it as Believers, as persons of God, by studying a conformitie to God, and by keeping his commandments, subjecting your selves to his Authoritie; not living according to your own Lusts; but according to the Laws and Rules which God hath given you, saith the Apostle here, *This the love of God, that we keep his Commandements.*

It is not a love in Word, and in Tongue, but in Reality; a love discovering it self by a consciencious care to hold conformitie to all the will of God; And if any should object, This is a hard saying, who can bear it? saith the Apostle, No such matter, there is never a Believing Soul will say the Commandements of Christ are grievous or burdensome; no, they are light to them that are brought over to the faith of the Gospel.

And the last thing I have to charge upon you, upon the account of your Gospel-believing, and being brought over to a closing with Christ, it is this, and so upon the matter I have given you an account of the substance of this precious Chapter, having reduced it to that general Doctrine I propounded before: I say the last thing is this, That you would walk suitable to a believing state, by being verie carefull concerning
your

your Worshipps that you do perform, that they be according to God, and according to the Gospel; and this is that which the Apostle closes the Chapter withall in the 21. Verse, *Little Children, keep yourselves from Idols. Amen.* As I take it, in the former Translation it was Babes, *Babes, keep yourselves from Idols;* here it is *Little Children.* I observe in this Epistle the Apostle makes a distinction of Believers into three Ranks, as you shall find in the second Chapter, *I write unto you Little Children, I write unto you young men, and I write unto you Fathers;* in the close of the Epistle he concludes with this Charge to Little Children; now whether he includes all the rest under this Title of *Little Children,* I forbear to dispute; but sure I am, it is a dutie lies upon one and other, whether they be Babes or Young men, or Aged Fathers in Christ; Whatever our rank and condition be, I am sure of this, This is a great Dutie that lies upon all that will approve themselves in Godlinesse, and to be brought over to the faith of the Gospel, that they look to their Worshipps, and that they take heed of Idols; as if he should say, He that is born of God, he keeps himself that the wicked One doth not touch him. Oh Little Children, shew forth that Spiritual Abilitie that by grace you are furnished withall, by being able to keep your selves from Idols.

It might be said, What is this to us? Are we in danger of Idols? True, well might the Apostle give in such a Charge to them in those times, when the greatest part of the World were in a state of Heathenisme, and in estrangement from Christ, and the mysteries of the Gospel; But this I say, it doth really concern Christians in Gospel times, that have had

had the breakings out of the Gospel light; and the knowledge of Gospel mysteries, to be carefull of this Charge, that they keep themselves from Idols; there were the Idols of the Heathens; grant it, and so still there are a generation of People that our Souls should mourn over to consider their state, that are wrapt up in ignorance of God, know nothing of the true God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and it is the state and condition of the Jews at this day; and what a sad condition are they in! Grant it that they do not worship Idols after the manner of the Heathens; yet they worship not the true God, because they worship not God in Christ; for saith the Apostle, *whoever sins, and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ, he hath not God; He that abides in the Doctrine of the Christ, he hath the Father and the Sonne*: And so the Jewes at this day, they not abiding, not owning the Doctrine of Christ, they have not God, because they have not the Father and the Sonne; this is their Condition; And thus I say, there were not only the Idols of the Heathens. Oh! but sadly be it spoken, there are Idols among Persons pretending to Christ, and Gospel-faith, and the Doctrine concerning Grace by Jesus Christ.

How many Idols and Idolators are there? I might tell you the Covetous person is an Idolater, the Voluptuous person, and the Self-justificarie sets up his own Righteousnesse, and idolizeth that: But I say this, there are Idols among Christians; Papist hold forth the Name of Christ, but yet what wofull Idolatry is there among them? There was the Dragon-worship in the time of the Heathens, and in the room of that there is come up the Beast worship, and of that
Worship

Worship the generality of the World runs upon; and it concerns us to keep from Popish Idolatry, it being the grossest Idolatry that ever was, because there is the fairest pretence of worshipping JESUS, and yet they turn him into an Idol. What else means their worshipping and bowing to Images, their breadden gods, and the like? Oh! therefore it concerns us to keep our selves from Idols; And there is a Scripture, if it were but well studied, would cause trembling of Heart, and make all that have any care of their Souls to look about them; that Scripture I refer you to, it is in *Revel. 13.* compared with the 20th. In *Revelations 13. 11.* whereas before there was Dragon-worship, it is said here, *I beheld another Beast coming out of the Earth, and he had two Hornes like a Lambe, and he spake as a Dragon, and he exerciseth all the Power of the first Beast before him, and causeth the Earth and them that dwell therein, to worship the first Beast, whose deadly wound was healed: now look at the 8. Verse, saith he, And all the dwellers upon the Earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life, of the Lambe slain from the foundation of the world.* Oh! it is a terrible word, and that that should make us to fear and tremble, lest in any kind we should be drawn in to the Worship of the Beast; for as many as were not written in the book of Life of the Lambe, they were drawn in to the Worship of the Beast. This is that that should make us keep our selves from Idols, from whatsoever hath but so much as a Tincture of Superstition and Idolatry; and the rather, considering that other Scripture in the 20th. of the *Revelation*, and the last Verse, *And whosoever was not found written*

in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire ; All that are not written in the Lambs book of life, are prevailed to perform the worship with the Beast, and not being writ there, must be tumbled into the Lake for ever.

This therefore concerns us, to keep from Idolatry, from whatsoever hath a tendency that way, and that hath any tincture of Superstition upon it; and consider with your selves, that our Duty is in matters of Worship, and in things concerning the Worship of God, to see to it, that we keep a humble dependance upon God, that we walk not according to the will of men, but according to God; *You were bought with a price, be not Servants of Men.* We are to walk by a Line, by a Plummets, and what is not warranted by the word of God, or maintainable by Arguments drawn from it, we should not close with.

And for the closing up of all, do but consider how this Chapter, and the things that I have spoken to you, and preached from it, how they do all influence this Exhortation, *Little children, keep yourselves from Idols*; see to it that you approve your selves in holy Worship to God and the Lord Jesus. Do but argue thus, You professe to be Believers; and is it not your Dutie to answer to this Profession? Your Faith is a pure Faith, and an obediential Grace; it is a Grace that will tutor you to hang upon Christ, and his Appointments and Institutions; And therefore being Believers, study to keep your selves from Idols, and whatever is not consonant to the will of God concerning Worship.

You believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Sonne of God; keep your selves from Idols in this respect; for he is come into the World, and hath shewed the pattern of his House; and then you are born of God; carry it like a People that are born of God, that are high born, and credit your holy Profession by keeping a dependance upon that God of whom you are borne: And then being believers, you are born of God, and have overcome the World, and therefore shew forth your Heroick Spirit, by standing out in opposition to Idols, and whatever is contrarie to sound Doctrine, and the power of Godlinesse.

You have an Unction from the Holy one, and this engages you to look to it, that you keep your selves from Idols; *And then we know (sayth he) that the Sonne of God is come, and hath given us understanding that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ.* And thereupon he brings in this, *Little Children, keep your selves from Idols:* as if he should say, This is the true God, God in Christ, Jesus Christ the Sonne of the Father, this is the true God, and he hath eternal life with him; other gods are false gods, and what benefit will you have by following them, and performing worship to them? Nothing but eternal Death; false gods can bestow no eternal life upon you; but this is the true God, and he can give you eternal life; And therefore, *Little Children, keep your selves from Idols.*

And now yet one word more. I would not occasion any discomposure of spirit that is not becoming you;

you ; But this I must say, for ought I know, you have the words of a Dying man , and we use to say that the words of Dying men they are apt to take somewhat a deep impression ; I mean a Dying man, not in propriety of speech according to nature ; and if it should be so , I hope there would be cause of rejoycing on my part ; But I speak the words of a Dying man in respect of Ministerial Office.

I suppose you all know there is an Act come forth by Supream Authority , and it is not for us to quarrel at all , but to submit to it, and hold correspondency with it so far as we can, with a good Conscience ; and there being many Injunctions that many , besides my self, cannot comply withall , therefore we are willing to submit to the penalty inflicted.

This I say, you have for many years had the benefit of my poor Labours; I have fulfilled near up towards 40. years, and have performed my service to God, Christ, and his People, and I blesse his name, not without acceptance and success. My Work . so far as I know, in this course, as in the Weekly course, is now at an end ; my Desire is, that you whose Hearts have been inclinable to wait upon God in the way of my Ministry, may be kept faithfull to God , and that you may have the blessing of the everlasting Covenant coming upon your Souls , and that you may have the power of this Doctrine held forth in this Sermon put forth upon Your Hearts; that as you do believe that Jesus is the Christ, that Jesus is the Sonne of God, that as you professe these things , you may carry it suitably
to

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to your Profession; that you may walk in Love to God, Love to Christ, and Love to one another; that you may labour to manifest a noble generous Spirit in overcoming the World in Errors, Corruptions, False Doctrines, and Unwarrantable Worship; that you may in all things labour to approve your selves :
*And Little Children, keep your Selves from Idols.
Amen.*

SER-



SERMON IV.

ISAIAH 3. 10, 11.

Say to the Righteous it shall be well with him ; for they shall eat the fruit of their Doings. Wo unto the wicked , it shall be ill with him ; for the reward of his hands shall be given him.

THis Text is like to Israels Pillar of Cloud , it hath a light side and a dark side ; it hath a light side to the godly , *Say to the righteous , it shall be well with him ;* and it hath a dark side to the wicked , *it shall be ill with him ;* both you see are rewarded , both the
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righteous

righteous and the wicked; but there's a vast difference; the one hath a reward of mercy, and the other a reward of Justice.

I shall begin with the first of these, *Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him.* This Scripture was written in a very sad and calamitous time, as you may read in the beginning of the Chapter, *The mighty man. the man of war doth cease, the prudent and the ancient, both the Judge and the Prophet shall be taken away.* This was a very sad time with the Church of God in *Jerusalem*; if the Judge be taken away, where will there be any piety? and if the prophet be taken away; where will there be any equity? the whole body Politick was now running to ruin, and almost in the rubbish: Now in this sad juncture of time God would have this Text to be written, and it is methinks like a Rain bow in the Clouds. God would have his people comforted in the midst of all these afflictions; *Say ye to the righteous it shall be well with him.*

The Proposition that lies in the words is this :

That however things go in the World, *It shall be well with the righteous.*

This is an Oracle from Gods own mouth; and therefore we are not to question or dispute it; *Say ye to the righteous it shall be well with him.* I might multiply Scriptures for the proof of this, but I shall instance but in one, *Eccles. 8. Surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God.* It is a golden Maxime not to be disputed: I know it shall go well with them that fear God.

For

For the illustration of this consider two things.

First , What is meant here by the *righteous man*.

Secondly , Why however things go, *it shall be well with him*.

First , Who is meant here by the *righteous man*.
There is a Threefold righteousness.

First , A legal righteousness , and so *Adam* in this sense was said to be righteous , when he did wear the robe of innocency ; *Adams* heart did agree with the Law of God exactly , as a well made Dial goes with the Sun ; but this righteousness is lost and forfeited.

Secondly , There is a Moral righteousness , and thus he is said to be righteous , that is adorned with Moral Vertues , who is prudent, just, temperate, and the like.

Thirdly , There is an Evangelical righteousness, and that is meant here ; and this Evangelical righteousness is twofold : A righteousness by imputation, and a righteousness by implantation.

First , There is a righteousness by imputation , and that is, when Christs righteousness is made over to us ; and this righteousness beloved , is as truly ours to justify us , as it is Christs, to bestow upon us.

Secondly, There is a righteousness by implantation, which is nothing else but Gods infusing of the seed and habits of grace into the heart, the planting of holiness in a man, and making him partaker of the divine nature: Now this is to be righteous in the sight of God; to have a righteousness of imputation, and a righteousness of implantation; and so much for the first thing.

The second thing is to shew you why however things go in the world, it shall be well with this righteous man; and it must needs be thus for two reasons.

First, Because he that is righteous, hath his greatest evil removed, his sin is pardoned; and therefore it must needs be well with him. Sin is a thorn in a mans conscience; now when this thorn is pluckt out in forgiveness and remission, then is it well with that man. Forgiveness of sin, in Scripture, is called the lifting off of sin; so it is in the Hebrew in *Iob 7. Lord why dost thou not lift off my sin?* It is a Metaphor taken from a weary man that goes under a burthen, ready to sink under it, and another man comes and lifts off this burthen; so doth the great God, when the burthen of sin is ready to sink the conscience, God lifts off this burthen from the conscience, and lays it upon Christs shoulders, and he carries it; now he that hath his Burthen thus carried, it is well for him, however things go. Pardon and forgiveness of sin it is a crowning blessing, it is a Jewel in a believers crown: Pardon of sin is a multiplying mercy, it brings a great many mercies

mercies along with it ; whom God pardons , he adopts ; whom God pardons , he invests with holiness and with glory. Pardon of sin is such a mercy that it is enough to make a sick man well , *Isa. 32. 24.* *The inhabitants shall not say they are sick, the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.* The sense of pardon takes away the sense of pain ; it must needs then be well with the righteous , his greatest evil is removed.

Secondly , How ever things go , *it shall be well with the righteous* , because God is his portion , *Psal. 16. 5.* *The Lord is the portion of my inheritance, the lines are fallen to me in pleasant places.* In God all things are to be found ; and all that is in God , is engaged for the good of the righteous ; his power is his to help him ; his wisdom is his to teach him ; his spirit is his to sanctify him ; and his mercy is his to save him. God is the righteous mans portion ; and can God give a greater gift to us , than to give us himself to us ? God is a rich portion , the Angels riches ; God is a safe and a sure portion , for his name is a strong tower ; he is a portion that can never be spent , for he is infiniteness ; and he is a portion can never be lost , for he is Eternity ; *Thou art my portion for ever, Psal. 73. 26.* And surely , it is well with them that have God for their portion ; is it not well with them that are happy ? why if God be our portion , we are happy. *Psal. 144. 16.* *Happy is the people whose God is the Lord.* And so much for the Doctrinal part.

The Explication of this point may afford abundance

dance of comfort to every godly man, to every person fearing God in this Congregation: God hath sent me this day with a Commission to comfort you, O that I might drop in the oil of gladness into every broken and troubled spirit; *Say to the righteous it shall be well with him*: Here's good news from heaven, however things are, yet still it is well with the righteous.

But here's a great question to be answered, How doth it appear that it is well with the righteous? for we often see it is worst with him; he is deprived of his comforts, he is made the reproach of the world for Christ, yea many times he loseth his life? how then is it well with the righteous?

I answer, Yet still is it well with the righteous; though he meet with trouble in the world, and one wave riseth upon the neck of another, yet is it well with the righteous, as appears in these following particulars.

First, All the troubles that a righteous man meets with, turn to his good, and so it is well with him: That's a famous Scripture, *Ier. 24. 5. Whom I have sent out of this place, into the Land of the Chaldeans, for their good.* Gods own Israel were transported into Babylon among their enemies, for their good. The troubles of the righteous are onely a means to purge out their sins, and that's for their good. I have read a story of one *Pereus*, who running at a another with a sword to kill him, by accident the sword onely run into his impostume, and broke that. Thus all the evils
and

and troubles of the righteous, do but serve to cure them of the imposthume of pride, and to make them more humble. When the body of a Saint is afflicted, his soul that revives and flourisheth in grace; like two lawrel trees that I have read of, that when one withered, the other flourished; so when the body is afflicted, yet grace flourishes. God doth distil out of the bitterest drugs his glory and our salvation. That that the world looks upon as a punishment, that God makes medicinal, to heal the soul. Well then may it be well with the righteous; the rod of God upon a Saint, is but onely Gods pencil, whereby he draws his image more lively upon the soul. God never stretcheth the strings of his Viol, but to make the musick so much the sweeter.

Secondly, In the midst of all the troubles that befall the righteous, yet still it is well with them, in regard of those inward heart-revivings that God gives them; we see a godly man in misery, but we see not his comforts; we see his prison grates, but we hear not that sweet musick that he enjoyes in his conscience. God sweetens to his people outward troubles with inward peace. It is the title that is given to God, 2 Cor. 6. 7. *The God that comforteth them that are cast down.* The bee can gather honey as well from the thistle and bitter herb, as from the sweet flower; and a Child of God can gather joy out of his sorrow; out of the very car-casse sometimes he fetcheth honey.

When the body is in pain, the soul may be at ease; as when a mans head akes, yet his heart may
 F 4 be

be well; Thus is it well with the Righteous; God gives him inward comforts that revive him, and sweeten outward pain.

3. In times of calamitie and trouble, yet still is it well with the Righteous, because many times God hears his people in time of trouble; in a storm God will have a care of his Jewels, he will hide them, and not suffer them to be carried away; and thus he makes good that Scripture literally, *Psal. 91. 4. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his Wings shalt thou trust; no evil shall touch thee.* God oftentimes verifies this Scripture literally, he makes his Angels to be his Peoples Lifeguard to hide them and to defend them. When a Flood was comming on the World, God provided an Ark to hide *Noah* in; When *Israel*, was carried and transported into *Babylon*, God hides *Jeremy*, and gives him his life for a prey, *Jerem. 39. 11, 21.*

And in this sence the Saints of God are called his hidden Ones, *Pf. 83. 3.* Why so? not only because they are hid in Gods decree, and hid in Christs wounds; but oftentimes God hides them in time of common danger & calamitie; they are hidden Ones: Thus God reserved to himself seven thousand that had not bowed the Knee to *Baal*; the Prophet knew not of any, but God knew of seven thousand that he had hid; and in this sence it is well with the Righteous in time of publick misery.

But you will say sometimes it is worse than all this with them; sometimes the Righteous dye and perish, and are carried away with a tempest; How is it well with them then? yes, yet still it is well with the Righteous;

zeous ; though their Life be taken away , yet still it is well with them , and that in a two-fold sence.

First, Many times God takes the Righteous by death in great mercy ; he takes them away that they shall not see the miseries that are coming upon a Land; as *Virgil* the Heathen Poet said , *They were happy that died before their Country* , meaning , before they saw the ruines of their Country. And truly many times God takes away his Children in mercy , that they shall not see the miseries that are coming on a Land; you have a pregnant and clear Scripture for this, *1 Kings 14. 13. He only of the house of Jeroboam shall come to his grave*; it is spoken of *Abijah* his Sonne, He only shall come to his grave, because in him there was found some good thing towards the Lord God of *Israel*. God would put this man into his grave betimes in mercy, because he should not see the evil that was coming upon the Land. You have a parallel Scripture to this, *2 Kings 22. v. ult.* it is spoken of *Iosiah* , *I will gather thee to thy Fathers , thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, and thine eyes shall not see the evil that I will bring upon this place.* Why, *Iosiah* died in Battel ; How is it said then that he went to his grave in peace? the meaning is this, because *Iosiah* was an holy man, he had made his peace with God, and so went to his grave in peace ; and because he should not see the evil approaching , therefore God gathered him to his grave in peace.

Ierome speaks thus of *Nepotian* , it seems *Ierome* lived to see some troubles before he died , meeting with some stormes ; Now (said he) *how happy is my Friend Nepotian, that sees not these troubles? happy is he that is gotten out of the storm, and is in the haven.* Thus

Thus *Luther* died in mercy before the troubles of *Germany* began to break forth. Thus it is well with the righteous, though they do die; God takes them away in mercy, that they may not see approaching evils.

Secondly, Though the righteous do die, are taken away, and perish in a storm, yet is it well with them, because death cannot hurt them; it can neither hurt their bodies, nor yet their souls; the body is safe, it doth not perish, though it doth die; the bodies of the Saints are very precious dust in Gods account; the Lord locks up these Jewels in the grave, as in a Cabinet; the bodies of the Saints lie mellowing and ripening in the grave, till a blessed time of resurrection: how precious is the dust of a believer! though the world minds it not, yet it's precious to God. The Husbandman hath some corn in the barn, and other corn in his ground; the corn in the ground is as precious to him as that in the barn: Why the bodies of the Saints in the grave, are Gods corn in the ground, and God makes a very precious account of this corn; the bodies of the Saints shall be more glorious and blessed then ever at the resurrection. *Tertullian* sayes the bodies shall then be *corpora Angelica*; the body shall be angelified, in regard of that beauty and lustre that shall be put upon it: As it is with a piece of silke or cloth that is died of a purple scarlet colour, it is made more bright and illustrious then it was before: Thus it is with the bodies of the Saints, they are died of a brighter colour at the resurrection, they are made like Christs glorious body, *Phil.* 3. 20. Thus shall it be well with the
righteous

righteous in their bodies; they shall not perish.

Secondly, At death it shall be well with the righteous, as to their souls. O it shall be a blessed time; Methinks it is with a Saint at the time of death just as it was with *Paul* in his voyage to *Rome*; the ship did break into many pieces, but yet he got safe to shore; so is it with a believer, though the ship of his body may be snapt and broken at death; yet the passenger is safe, the soul gets safe to shore, even to the heavenly *Ierusalem*; then surely it is well with the righteous at his death; the day of a believers death is the birth-day of his blessednesse; it is his ascension day to heaven; his death day is his marriage day with *Jesus Christ*; faith doth but contract us here, but at death the Nuptials shall be solemnized in glory; and shall it not be well with the righteous? they shall see God face to face: And says *Austin*, *Ipsè Deus sufficit ad premium*. It will be heaven enough to have the sight of God. The Saints shall then enter into joy; joy now enters into them here, but then they shall enter into joy; they shall drink of that pure river that runs from God the everlasting fountain.

Thus you see it shall go well with the righteous however things go, though troubles come, though death it self come; and therefore let those that are the people of God comfort themselves with these words.

To conclude this first point, what encouragement is this to all you that hear me now, to begin to be righteous! This Text may tempt us all to be godly,
Say

Say to the righteous it shall be well with him ; when things go never so ill with him ; yet still it shall be well with him : Grant that all things are ill with you in your estate , in your relations , yet then if you are righteous , all things shall be well with you , your pardon is sealed , you are an heir of all Gods promises , all things shall work for your good ; you have God for your father , you have heaven in reversion for your inheritance ; and is it not well with you ? how may this make us all in love with godlinesse , how may this tempt us to be godly ? for if ever we would enjoy happinesse , we must espouse holinesse ; Say to the righteous it shall be well with him . And so much for the first proposition , The godly mans comfort in life and death.

Now if this will not prevail with men to make them leave their sins and become righteous , I must passe in a few words to the next branch of my Text , to scare men out of their sins , to affright them out of their wickednesse ; *Wo to the wicked , it shall be ill with him ; for the reward of his hands shall be given him .* This my beloved is the dark side of the cloud , and it may cause in every wicked man that hears me , a palpitation and trembling at the heart , *Wo to the wicked , it shall be ill with him .* And so the Proposition is this :

That when things seem to be well with wicked men , it shall be ill with them at last.

Though things seem to be well with the wicked , they have more then heart can wish , yet it shall be ill
with

with them at last; *Va improbo, VVo to the wicked*, it shall be ill with them. In Eccles. 8. 12. It shall not be well with the wicked, nor shall he prolong his days, that are as a shadow, because he feareth not God. The God of Truth hath pronounced it, this is as true as God is true, *It shall not be well with the wicked.*

Now that I may a little clear this to you, I shall demonstrate it to you in these following particulars :

1. It is ill with the wicked in this life.
2. It is ill with him at his death.
3. It is ill with him at the day of Judgement.
4. It is ill with him after the day of Judgement.

First, It is ill with the wicked in this life. There's hardly a wicked man that hears me, that thinks so, when he hath the affluence and confluence of outward comforts, when he eats of the fat, and drinks of the sweet, he will hardly believe that Minister that tels him it shall be ill with him; yea but it is ill with the wicked even in this life; for is it not ill with that man that hath a curse, yea the curse of God entailed upon him? My Text pronounceth a curse against the sinner, *Va improbo, VVo to the wicked*: And can that man thrive that lives under a curse? Clouds of blood and wrath hang over the head of a wicked man; he is heir to all the plagues that are written in the Book of

of God; all Gods curses are the Sinners portion, and if he dyes in his finnes, he is sure to have the portion paid him. Wo to the Wicked; every bit of Bread he eateth he hath it with a curse, like poysoned Bread given to a Dogg; every drop of Wine he drinks, he swallows down a curse with it. Wo to the wicked, there is a curse in his Cup, there is a curse on his Table; God hath said, Wo to him.

We read of Belsazar, *Dan. 5. 4, 5.* that when he tasted the wine, he commanded to bring the gold and silver taken out of the Temple; then they brought the gold and silver vessels, and drank wine, and prayed the gods of gold and silver. He was very jovial, but in the midlt of his cups and jollity, woe to the Wicked; for in the same hour there came forth the fingers of a Mans hand, and wrote over against the Candlestick on the wall a Curse and a Woe. Wo to the wicked; let a sinner live till he be a hundred years old, yet still he is accursed, *Esay 23. 20.* *Though a sinner live a hundred years old, yet shall he dye accursed; his grey hairs have a curse upon them.*

Secondly, It shall be ill with the Wicked at the hour of death, and that in two respects; Death puts an end to all his comforts, and Death is a beginning of all his miseries.

First, Death puts an end to a Sinners comforts. There shall be no more indulging of the Flesh, and pampering of it; no more cups of Wine, and no more Musick to be seen or heard then. In *Revel. 18. 14, & 22.* *The things that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee; the voyce of Harpers, Musicians and Trumpeters*

Trumpeters shall be no more at all in thee; it is spoken of the destruction of *Rome*. Thus may it be said of a wicked man at death, All joy and pleasure is now departed from thee; no more shalt thou hear the voice of the Harp, Organ or Trumpet: no more shall the Sinner be cloathed in Scarlet robes, or adorned with sparkling Diamonds; Now all oyle and balsome, all joy and gladness, at death shall all cease and depart from the Sinner,

Secondly, As death puts a period to a Sinners mirth, so it layes a foundation for all his sorrows. Usually before death doth close the eye of the Sinners body, the eye of his Conscience is first opened.

Every sin at the hour of death stands with a drawn Sword in his hand; Those sins that delighted the Sinner formerly, now terrifie and affright him, All his joy and mirth is turned into sadness.

As sometimes you have seen Sugar lying in a damp place, dissolve and turn to Water: Thus all the sugary joyes of Wicked men at the hour of death turn to Water, even the Water of Teares and Sorrow.

Thirdly, It shall be ill with a Wicked man at the day of Judgement, when he is cited before Gods Tribunal, when he shall leave courting his wickednesse, and stand at Gods Barr to answer for it.

You read of *Felix*, that when he heard *Paul* speak of Judgement, *Felix* trembled. *Iosephus* observed that *Felix* was a wicked man; and she that then lived with him, her name was *Drusilla*, whom he had enticed

ticed away from her Husband, and lived in sinne with her; Now when *Felix* heard *Paul* speak of Judgement, he trembled, his Conscience that check'd him for his sinne.

Now, if *Felix* trembled at the hearing of Judgement, what will Sinners do when the day of Judgement shall come, when all mens secret sins shall be made manifest, when all their midnight wickedness shall be written upon their Foreheads as with the point of a Diamond?

At the day of Judgement, my Beloved, there will be two things:

First, The Legal Tryal.

Secondly, The Sentence.

First, The Legal Tryal. God will call forth Sinners by Name, and say, Stand forth, Hear thy Charge, Let me see what thou canst answer to it? What canst thou say for all thy Sabbath-breaking? for all thy Drunkenesse and Perjury? for all thy Revenge and Malice? for all thy persecuting of my Members? what canst thou say for all these? Guilty or not guilty? Thou Wretch darest not say Not guilty; for have not I been an eye-witnesse of all thy Wickednesse? do not the Books agree, the Book of thy Conscience, and the Book of my Omniscieny? and canst thou plead Not guilty? Here the Sinner will be amazed with horreur, and run into desperation.

Secondly;

Secondly , After this legal Tryal follows the Sentence, *Ite maledicti*, Go ye cursed; What go from the presence of Christ, in whose presence there is fulness of joy , and go from Christ with a curse ! That word *depart*, said Saint *Chrysostome*, is worse than the torments themselves.

And Beloved, remember this ye that go on in a sinne, when once the Sentence is past, it can never be reversed; This is the most Supreme Court of Judicature, from whence there is no Appeal. Here on Earth men can remove their Cause from one Court to another, from the Common law to the Chancery : but if once the Sentence be past at this Judgement barr, there is no removing your Cause. This is the highest Court, there is no appealing any where else. And thus you see it is ill with the Wicked at the day of Judgement.

Fourthly , It shall be ill with the Wicked after the day of Judgement. Oh ! then there is but one way, and they would be glad if they might not go that way; But they must go that way even to prison, yea to hell, *Luke 16. 23, 24. In Hell he lift up his eyes.* Hell is the very center of Miserie, the spirit of torments stilled out.

The Scripture tells us, In Hell there are three things :

First , Darknes.

Secondly , Fire.

Thirdly , Chaines.

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First,

First, Hell is called a place of Darknesse. In *Iude* Verse 13. *To them is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.* Darknesse you know is the most uncomfortable thing in the world: A man that goes in the dark trembles every step that he goes; Hell is a black Region; There is nothing but blacknesse of darknesse; It must needs be a dark place, where there shall be a separation from the light of Gods presence. Indeed *Anstis* thinks, that there shall be some little sulphureous light: But suppose there be; that light shall onely serve the damned to behold the tragedy of their own miserie, to see themselves tormented.

Secondly, In Hell there is Fire; it is called a burning Lake, *Revel. 20. 15. Whosoever was not found written in the book of Life, was cast into the lake of fire.* You know Fire is the most torturing Element; it makes the most dreadful impression upon the Flesh. Why Hell is a place of Fire; it is disputed among some of the learned what kind of fire it is; I wish we may never feel what kind of fire it is.

Anstis, *Peter Lombard*, and others affirm, That it is a material Fire, but far hotter than any culinary fire; the fire on your hearths is but painted fire compared to this. But I rather think, the fire of the damned is partly material, and partly spiritual. Partly material, to work upon the Body; and partly spiritual, which is the wrath of God to torment the Soul: This is that Lake of burning fire; Oh! who knows the power of Gods anger? who can dwell with these burnings? It is intolerable to bear these scorchings, and it is impossible for the damned to escape them.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, In Hell there are Chains of darknesse; in the 6th. Verse of the Epistle of *Iude*, *Those sinners that would not be bound by any law of God, shall have chains of darknesse to bind them.* But what is the meaning of this phrase, *chains of darknesse*?

I suppose it may be this, to intimate to us, That the wicked in Hell shall not have power to walk up and down; which perhaps would be a little ease to them, though a very little; yea but they shall not have so much as that little ease, but shall be chained, tyed, and staked fast down with chains of darkness, that they shall not stirre; and this is very terrible.

Suppose a man did alwayes lye on a down-bed, if he might not stirre off the place, it would be very painfull to him, though on a bed of down; How terrible then will it be to the damned, that must lie under the scorplings of Gods fury, chained down, and not be able to move? And thus shall it be to the Wicked.

And to adde to the torments of Hell, there are two things which shew it shall be ill with the wicked, let them dye when they will.

First, There is the Worme.

Secondly, There is the Serpent.

First, There is the Worme to torture the Spirit and this is no other but the worme of Conscience, *Mat. 4. 44. Where their worme never dyes;* How dreadfull will it be to have this Worme gnawing continually! *Melancthon* called it a hellish fury. Conscience will

be juſt as if a worme full of poyſon were gnawing the heart of a man; Thoſe ſinners that would never hear the voyce of Conſcience, ſhall for ever feel the worme of Conſcience.

Secondly, There is the Serpent, and that the Devil called the old Serpent, *Revel. 4.* As there is the biting of the Worme, ſo there is the ſtinging of the Serpent. The damned in Hell ſhall be forced to behold the Devil, that damned Monster. I remember what *Anſelme* ſayth, *I had rather endure all the torments of this life, than ſee the Devil with bodily eyes*; But this ſight of the Devil the Wicked ſhall ſee whether they will or no; and not only ſee, but ſhall feel the ſtings of this old Serpent.

Sathan is full of rage againſt Mankind, and he will ſhew no mercy; as he puts forth all his ſubtilty in tempting men, ſo he puts forth all his cruelty in tormenting men.

And this is not all; there are two things more that aggravate the torments of hell, to ſhew that it ſhall be ill with the wicked.

First, Theſe agonies, theſe hell-convulſions ſhall be for ever, *Revel. 14. 11.* *The ſmoak of their torment aſcended for ever and ever, and they ſhall have no reſt day nor night.* Thus is it in Hell; they would dye, but they cannot; *mors ſine morte*, the wicked ſhall be alwayes dying, yet never dead; alwayes conſuming, yet never conſumed; *the ſmoak of their furnace aſcends for ever and ever.*

Oh! who can endure thus to be for ever on the wrack; this word *Ever* breaks the heart of the wicked;

ed ; they now think a Sabbath long , and a Sermon long , and a prayer long ; they cry out , When will these be over ! Oh ! how long then will it be to lye in Hell torments for ever and ever ? After the wicked have layen there millions of years , their torments will be as far from ending as they were the first hour they came there.

Secondly , The damned in Hell shall have none to pity them. It is some comfort and ease to have friends pity us when we are on our sick-beds , or under any affliction : but the damned shall have none to pity them ; Mercy will not pity them ; that is turned to fury ; Christ will not pity them , he is no more an Advocate for them ; Angels will not pity them , for they rejoyce to see the vengeance , they insult and glory to see the justice of God executed upon them. Oh ! how sad is it to lye in the scalding furnace of Gods wrath ; and to have none to pity us ? Gods bowels will be locked up , and his heart will be hardened to damned sinners ; then they shall call and God will laugh at them , *Prov. i. 26. I will laugh at your calamity.* Hear this all you that go on in sin , *it will be ill with the wicked ; O therefore turn from your sins , lest God tear you in pieces , and there be none to deliver , or help you.*

For the application of this point.

First , What a confounding word is this to all the Wicked , that go on desperately in sinne ? that add drunkenesse to thirst ? Never was there such an inundation of wickednesse , as there is now adayes . Men sinne , as if they would sinne to spight God ; as if they would dare Heaven to punish them :

men sinne so greedily , as if they were afraid Hell gate would be shut up ere they could get thither. How many are there that sinne manfully ? that go to Hell stoutly in their wickedness ? as *Seneca* speaks. These are in a sad condition. Remember what the Text saith, *No to the wicked, it shall be ill with them*; ill with them in li e, in death, and after death; A wicked man lives cursed, and dyes damned. Sinners are Gods standing mark that he shoots at, and he never misseth the mark. You know what the Scripture sayth , *There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

It is a saying of *Latimer* , That is very sad fare, where weeping is the first course, and gnashing of teeth is the second.

But whence may this gnashing of the teeth come ?

First , It ariseth from the extremity of the torments that the damned suffer ; this makes them gnash their teeth with horriour, they are not able to bear it, and yet they know not how to avoid it.

Secondly , The Wicked gnash their teeth out of envy , to think that the Godly are happy and blessed; those that they reproached, hated and persecuted, they are happy in glory , and they themselves are thrown down into Hell ; this cuts them to the heart to think of it, and makes them gnash their teeth, *Luke 10. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you shall see Abraham , and Isaac , and Jacob in the kingdom of God , and you your selves thrust out.* And that is the first use shewing the misery of a wicked man; if all the Curses in the Bible will make him miserable , he shall be miserable. God will make his Arrows drunk with his blood.

Secondly,

Secondly take heed that none of you are here found in the number of the wicked ; take heed of being of this black Regiment ; beware of the Devils colours ; fight not under his Banner ; it shall be ill with the wicked ; the Sinner and the Furnace shall never be parted.

In a word , I beseech you take heed of those finnes that bring to Hell fire. There are, said Saint *Bernard*, fiery finnes that bring men to Hell fire. VVhat are these fiery finnes ? VVhy they are the fire of Malice, the fire of Passion, the fire of Lust, the fire of Concupiscence, and the fire of Revenge : these fiery sins bring men to fiery plagues, to Hell fire. When you are tempted to any sinne, think with your selves , How can I bear the lying in the fiercenets of the Wine-press of Gods wrath for ever !

I have read a story of a Virgin, that being tempted by a young man to commit folly, sayes she to him , If you will grant me but one request , I will do what you desire : VVhat is that ? said he. VVhy, do but hold your Finger one hour in this burning Candle ; No, he would not do that ; said she to him , Will not you for my sake hold your Finger one hour in the Candle, and would you have me lay my Soul burining in Hell for ever, for the satisfying of your Lust ? And thus she refused that temptation.

VVhy doth Sathan tempt you to wickednesse ? hold up this text against the Devil as a shield to quench his fiery darts ; Sathan, it will go ill with the wicked ; If I embrace thy temptation , I must be under thy tormenting for ever.

O therefore learn to be Righteous ; it shall be well with the Righteous ; take heed of living and dying in sinne : It shall be ill with the VVicked ; the God of Heaven hath said it.

I will conclude all with a saying of *Austine*; sayes he,
*VVhen a man hath been vertuous, the labour is gone,
 and the joy remains : when a man hath been wicked, the
 pleasure is gone, and the sting remaineth.*

John Davie

SER.



SERMON V.

I O H N 8. 27.

*And he that sent me , is with
me : the Father hath not left
me alone : for I do alwayes
those things that please him.*

THese are the words of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are spoken by himself, and they are spoken of himself; though yet in a sober and modest sence they are applicable to all his members: That vvhich Christ here affirms, is
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that the presence of God was alwayes with him ; and this is first propounded , *He that sent me is with me ;* and then it is amplified , *and the father hath not left me alone :* and then thirdly the reason of this is annexed . *for I alwayes do those things that please him,*

I shall speak but very little of the words as they do refer to Christ : he tels us where his Father was with him ; he did not leave him alone in all the troubles and difficulties that he met withal in the finishing the great work of mans redemption ; still God was with him : It is true , there was a time when Christ was without the sensible manifestation of his Fathers presence , when he cryed out , *My God , my God , why hast thou forsaken me ?* Why but yet even then in truth and in reality his Father did not leave him ; for though he had not the evidences of his Fathers presence , yet he had the influences of his fathers presence . It would take up much time to shew you how in all particulars the Father was present with Christ : I will onely speak this one vvord , and instance in this one thing ; Gods assisting presence was alwayes with him , both in his active , and also in his passive obedience ; and indeed he had that work to do , and those miseries to suffer , that if God had left him , if he had not been mightily assisted by the Divine Nature , Christ as meet man could neither have done , nor have suffered what he did ; but the Father was with him , and to support him ; *Isa. 42. 1. Behold my servant whom I uphold.* You shall find that Christ did act faith upon this ; in *Isa. 50. 7. The Lord God will help me , therefore shall I not be confounded.* Ver. 9. *The Lord will help me.* So to the same effect is *Psal.*

Psal. 16. 9. And you shall find this made good to him in Scripture, in his greatest necessities.

Take a Double Instance.

In the first place, After he had been engaged in that Combat with Satan, you read of in *Matth. 4.* the strongest Combat or Duel that ever was fought; wherein you have the Prince of Peace and the prince of darknesse; the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*, and the roaring Lion that seeks how to devour; both of them putting forth their utmost strength, and endeavouring to overcome each the other: Now I say in this Combat the Father did not leave Christ, but he helps him; for he sends an Angel for to minister unto him, *Matth. 4. 11.*

So in Christs bitter Agony in the Garden, just before his bitter passion and death upon the Crosse, the Father did not leave him alone, for he sent an Angel unto him to strengthen him, *Mat. 22. 43.* and so in several other places, and in several other things I might instance; but I shall passe this by. I but now, Why did the Father thus stand by Christ? he gives you the reason of it in the Text, because he alwayes did the things that pleased him: This I shall open in a double respect.

First, Christs undertaking of the work of our Redemption, it was very well pleasing unto his Father, that poor lost undone sinners should be brought back again unto God, and restored unto his love and favour: I say, the Father was infinitely well pleased with Christ in this undertaking, *Isa. 53. 10.* *The pleasure of the Lord*

Lord shall prosper in his hand; the pleasure of the Lord, that is the work of our redemption; wherein God the Father took great pleasure or delight; therefore when Christ was publicly in the eye of the world to enter upon this great work, the Father sends him out with this witnesse, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*. He speaks not of his well pleasing onely to his person, but also of his well pleasing as unto his undertaking.

Secondly, As the work it self was pleasing unto God, so Christs managing of this work was all along pleasing unto his Father; and that doth appear in this, that Christ in all things kept to his Fathers Commission, and to his Fathers command: I say in all things he kept to his Fathers Commission; he did nothing here upon Earth, but what was within the compasse of his Commission; for saith he in the verse before the Text, *I do nothing of my self, but as my Father bids me*. So also he acted in conformity to his Fathers will; that was the rule and square by which Christ ordered all his actions; his eye was still upon his Fathers will; what ever he willed him to do, that he did; what ever he willed him to suffer, that he suffered; and thus he alwayes did the things that were pleasing to his Father; but I do not intend further upon the words in this reference: For my design is to bring down the words unto our selves, to those that are the members of Christ; for there is the same disposition of heart in all believers to please God: In all things to please God; this was the frame and temper and carriage of Christ; so it is the frame and temper of every true believer; and
this

this is a part of our likenesse unto Christ; as you know there is a blessed resemblance and similitude between Christ and his members; they have the same spirit that Christ had, onely in a different proportion; for he had it without measure; they have the same grace as Christ had for substance, though not for degree; of his fulnesse we all have received grace for grace; that is, as many interpret it, grace answerable unto grace: As the print in the wax answers to the print in the Seal; and as face answers to face; so grace in believers answers unto that grace that was in Christ: They are to shew forth the vertues of Christ, *1 Pet: 2. 11.* *Now this was the grace and vertue and holinesse of Christ, that he alwayes did the things that pleased his Father.* Why this is in all believers, onely with this difference; it was a actual performance in the one, it is but endeavour in the other; it was perfect in the one; it is sincere, but imperfect in the other.

Christ alwayes did the things that pleased God; a believer endeavours alwayes to do the things that please God; he doth not alwayes do so; witnesse *David* in the Case of his uncleannesse, when he displeased the Lord, as it is in *2 Sam. 11.*

The Observation I intend to speak to, shall be this:

They that please God, and endeavour alwayes to do the things that please God, such God will be with; such the Father will not leave alone; especially in times of suffering and trouble; for I will bring it to that Case.

Indeed

Indeed God will not leave such at any time ; for that promise is exceeding full, *Heb. 13. 5. I will never leave thee , nor forsake thee.* I do not know any one promise in all the Bible , that is exprest with such an Emphasis as that promise is ; such a multiplication of negatives in the Original. But especially God will not leave such in an afflicted and suffering condition.

In the prosecuting of this I will speak to four things :

First, I will shew you when a man may be said to do the things that please God. 2. I will confirm the truth of the Doctrine. 3. I will shew you in what respects God will be with them that desire to please him , in a suffering condition. 4. I will give you the grounds and reasons of it ; and then I shall come to an Application.

For the first , We please God in what we do , when we act 1. In a suitableness to Gods nature : And 2. In subjection to Gods Law : For pleasing of God lies in these two things. As that pleases a man which is suitable to his disposition , and is correspondent with his Command : We do the things that please God , when we do that which God doth ; and when we do that which God commands : When we hate sin , as God hates sin ; when we are holy , as God is holy. You shall find it in *Col. 1. 10. That you may walk worthy of God , unto all well-pleasing.* Observe, This walking worthy of God , is walking suitably , or walking answerably to God. *Matth. 3. 8. Bring forth fruit*

fruit worthy of repentance ; or bring forth fruit answerable to repentance ; so to walk worthy of God, is to walk suitable to God, to his nature : Now then observe what follows, that you might walk worthy of God to all well-pleasing ; then we please God, when we walk suitably unto God : So also when we act in a blessed conformity to God, to his Law; for nothing can please the good God, but what is good : Now the Law being the measure and standard of all goodnesse, nothing can be good, but what bears conformity to this Law, which is the will of God. God is well pleased, when his will is observed : As you know, you that are Masters, your servants please you when they do your will. That inference of the Apostle for this is very apposite, *Rom. 8. 8. So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God.* What is this same inference grounded upon? because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can; so that they that are in the flesh, cannot please God. Why? because there is that principle in them, as carries out a real enmity to the Law and will of God; it is as if the Apostle had said, They will not be subject to Gods will, not obedient to Gods commands; there is a principle of enmity in them against these things, and so cannot please God : God is pleased when his will is fulfilled, and his commands observed; to please God, is in all things so to act, that whatever we do, we may expresse a likeness to Gods nature, and a blessed subjection to Gods revealed will, and this is the first thing.

A second thing is the proof of the Doctrine ; they that thus please God , he will be with them , he will not leave them alone ; especially in an hour of trial : For my brethren , assure your selves of this , that which the Father did for Christ , he will do for all his members ; it is true , Christs sufferings , being greater than ours possibly can be , and so his relation to God being higher than ours is ; he a Son by eternal Generation , we onely by Adoption ; he had the presence of God in a more glorious manner then we can expect ; but yet in our Sphere according to the measure of our trial , and according to our capacity , we shall as really have the presence of God with us , as Christ had with him ; that as we are partakers of Christs sufferings , so we also shall be partakers of Christs support ; He that will be present with believers in heaven , as he is with Christ , he will be present with believers here on earth , as he was with Christ in all his sorrows and sufferings.

Now for the confirming of this comfortable truth , I need not speak much : Many promises you have in Scripture for it , and whatever God hath promised , he will certainly make good : Turn to that one promise instead of many , *Isa. 43. 2. When thou passest through the water , I will be with thee ; through the rivers , they shall not overflow thee ; when thou walkest through the fire , thou shalt not be burn , neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.* And you shall find too that the Saints have experienced it in all ages , God hath made it good.

Jacob

Jacob was a man that met with many sharp trya's, God exercised him with many troubles; you shall find that when he was going to *Padan Aram*; and was in a very afflicted condition, *Gen. 28. 15.* God comes unto him, and saith, *Behold I am with thee. Gen. 31. 5.* His father frowned upon him, but the God of his fathers helped him: *Joseph, Gen. 29. 20.* his Master took him, put him into prison, a place where the Kings prisoners were bound; he was in the prison, but the Lord was with *Joseph*. The Prophet *Jeremy* was thrown into a dungeon, but the Scripture saith, *God was with him.* The three Children were thrown into the Furnace of fire, but there was a fourth with them, and that was the Son of God, *Dan. 3. 25.* *Paul* when he was brought to his tryal, all men forsook him, but God stood by him, *2 Tim. 4. 16.* So the Christians in all their sharp sufferings, *2 Cor. 4. 9.* they were persecuted but not forsaken; persecuted by men, but not forsaken by God. God hath abundantly made out this, and doth so still, that he will never leave those alone in a time of suffering, who desire unfeignedly in all things to please God.

Now the third thing is to shew you in what respects God is with such: why this presence of God is an active presence: God is not meerly with his people, but he is with them in an active way: for this is a certain truth, God is working when 'the Saints are suffering, I will open this in several particulars.

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First,

First, God is with such in his teaching presence. Gods correction and Gods instruction they usually go together; and where there is the chastenings of Gods hand, there is also the teaching of Gods Spirit, *Psal. 90. 12. Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, and whom thou teachest.* Christ though he were a Son, yet learned obedience by the things that he suffered: God teacheth his upright ones many lessons in a time of adversity, which they never learned in a time of prosperity. For we are like idle boyes, or bad Schollers, that learn best when the rod is over us: In a prosperous condition God speaks to us, and we mind him not, *Jeremy 22. 21. I spoke to thee in thy prosperity, but thou wouldest not bear:* and this hath been thy manner from thy youth upwards: In prosperity God speaks once and twice, as *Job* speaks, but we will not hear; but in the time of adversity God opens the eares: *Judges 8. 16. As Gideon taught the men of Succoth with thornes and briars:* so doth God teach his people by affliction: and oh the many blessed truths that they learn, when they are under the rod, when they want liberty! Oh what a mercy is it to have liberty then, when they have not Ordinances as before! what a mercy is it to have Ordinances then! Oh what an evil thing is it then for them, that they have departed from God! God teaches them these things then: sin is never so bitter, mercy is never so sweet, as in a time of suffering: Oh how vain and empty is the creature then! Oh how sweet is communion with
 God

God then! I say such things as these God teaches then.

Secondly, God is with such in his guiding presence, *Psalms 73. 24. Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me unto glory.* When *Israel* was in the wilderness, then they had the cloud to guide them. It is a blessed thing to live under the conduct and direction of the wise God: we never have so much of this as in an hour of travel: indeed the people of God never flie so much to God for direction as at such a time: as *Saul*, when he was in distress, then he calls for the Ephod, and thus it is with us under affliction, then we look to God.

Thirdly, God is with them in his preserving and hiding presence: God is the Saints hiding place, their Shield, their Buckler, their Rock, their defence: the Scripture-expressions are many to hold out Gods protection as to his people: God hath a constant care over them to preserve them and save them; oh but especially in a time of trouble: as the Mariner is never so careful of the ship as under a storm; and God is never so careful of his Church and people as under affliction. *Jeremy* is in the Dungeon, now God saves him: *Daniel* is in the Den, now God saves him: The three Children in the Fire, now God saves them: *Peter* is in prison, now God saves him: The Mother never tends the Child so carefully, as when the Childe is sick; and Providence is never

so tender to the people of God, as under a suffering condition.

Fourthly, God is with them in his comforting presence: 2 Cor. 4. 1. *Who comforteth us in all our tribulation*: and usually we have most of consolation from God, when we have most of tribulation from without: as our sufferings do abound, so our consolation doth abound much more: The Child that is beaten when it is well, is cherished when it is ill: when persons are sick, then you give them cordials: God gives the best of comforts in the worst of times: when the burden is heavy upon the back, then the peace of conscience is great within: the worse it is without, the better it is within: when men discover most of anger, then God discovers most of love.

Fifthly, God is with such in his strengthening presence, to enable them, and to support them to undergo whatever he is pleased to call them unto: this is the way of our good and gracious God, he alwayes gives out strength as he layes on affliction: he never leaves his Children alone in this respect: he will be with them to support them: though it may be not to deliver, yet he will certainly be with them to support; the rod and the staffe they go together, *Psal. 23. 4. the afflicting rod and the supporting staffe*: when one hand is upon the Saint to afflict, then the other hand is underneath the Saint to support: *Isai. 41. 10. I will uphold thee, I will strengthen thee; fear not, I will help thee, yea*
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I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. This David found, I cryed unto the Lord in my distress, he answered me, and strengthened me in my inward man, Psal. 138. 3. Oh when men afflict, God supports: when men put the Children of God into deep waters, then God takes them by the chin and holds them up, that they shall not sink and be drowned.

Sixthly, God is with them in his sympathizing presence: Oh he hath a tender sence of all the sorrows and calamities of his people! Oh it grieves him when they are grieved! they that touch them touch the apple of his eye: in all their afflictions he is afflicted, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Every blow that is given to them, God beares a part of it himself: as they are sensible of Gods dishonour, so God is sensible of their sufferings; it pains him to the heart to see his Children wronged and abused by a malicious world.

Seventhly, He is with them by his sanctifying presence: all their troubles are to do them good, and to make them good: and therefore the furnace it is but to refine them from their dross: the pruning hook of affliction it is but to cut off their luxuriant branches: God takes the sharp knife into his hand and lances them, but it is only to fetch out their corruption: by this shall the iniquity of *Jacob* be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his sin.

Eighthly, God is with them by his quickening presence, to make their prayers more fervent, to make their requests to the Throne of Grace more importunate. The Children of God cry most to him when they suffer most from men, and their prayers are best when their condition is worst: Prayer shortens affliction, and affliction heightens prayer: God is with them to hear their prayers. Oh the prayer of the afflicted that comes up to heaven! God heares the sighs and groans of his oppressed ones, their tears pierce the heavens, they call upon God in time of trouble, and poure out their sorrows before the Lord, and he doth hear them.

Ninthly, God is with them by his raising presence to raise up their hearts higher, to elevate their souls, and bring them more near to himself. Gods people when they meet with troubles in the world, oh nothing so sweet unto them as the enjoyment of God: then no life so sweet unto them as the life of faith; then they relish a sweetness in the promise: then every smile of God, oh how welcome is it! then all the affections of their souls center in God, and run to God: as in winter time all the sap of the tree runs to the root: in summer time it spreads it self in the body, but in the winter goes to the root: when a man is sick, all the blood goes to the heart: so in a suffering condition all the affections of the soul go to God.

But now what are the Reasons why God will not leave his people that thus desire to please him?

Why,

Why, God loves them, therefore he will not leave them; persons we love we cannot leave: especially when they are in a distressed condition; and as God hath set his love upon them, so they have set their love upon God, they love God. *Psal. 91. 15. you have there an expression, Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore I will deliver him: he shall call upon me, and I will answer him, I will be with him in trouble.* God is a God of bowels, of great pitty and compassion, and therefore he will not leave his people in a time of distress: you know bowels how they stand in you towards them that are in misery; it goes to the heart of a merciful man to leave a person in misery: Oh how great are the bowels and compassions of God! *Is Ephraim my son, is he a pleasant child? Oh my bowels are turned within me, I will have mercy on him.*

2. Such as please God shall have his presence under suffering, because now they need God most: if God will not leave his people as to temporal supplies, because they need such and such things; they need meat, and they need cloathing: surely much more God will not leave his Children, as to spiritual supplies, under times of distress, because then they need God. Oh what can a Believer do? or what can a Believer suffer when God leaves him; his strength is in God: his support is in God: his comfort is in God: his all is in God, and therefore if God now leave him, what will become of him: he needs God at all times, but never so much as when his condition is dark and troubled.

what was *Simpson*, that man of so great strength, when his hair was gone? and what is a Believer when his God is gone?

3. God loves to see his people chearful in a time of suffering, and therefore he is with them; he loves not that they should walk dejectedly. When God is present, *Paul* and *Silas* can sing in prison: the Apostles can rejoyce, that God honours them to be reproached for him. When God is present, the people of God are not only chearful under tribulation, but can glory: their crosse is their crown: but if God be withdrawn, what can there be? drooping hearts, and pensive sorrows.

4. God will not leave them, because they will not leave God: God will not leave them, because they suffer for his sake: were they not tender of Gods glory, and careful to please him, they might be free from suffering as well as others; but it is for Gods sake they suffer; *For thy sake we are killed like sheep all the day long.*

Lastly, It is thus, because God will make it appear to all the world, that he puts a difference between them that desire to please him, and other men: God hath a value for such: Do but see how *Moses* argues the case with God, *Exod. 33. 13.* and so on, where he comes to God with a great request, that God would shew him his way that he might know it: why saith God to him, *My presence shall go with thee.* *Moses* said unto him, It is well thou art pleased to promise so great a mercy; *If thy presence go*
not

not with me, carry us not hence: for wherein shall it be known that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in this, that thou goest with us? Observe, Moses pleads with God, how his favour, and love, and mercy should be with them, unless he were present with them: and so God, he walks with his people in trouble; for how should the world see God regarded them, and did favour them, unless he manifested his presence unto them in a time of trouble and affliction?

The End of the sixth Sermon.

SER-





S E R M O N V I.

Rev. 2. 5.

Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.



Christ here prescribes pretious physick for the healing of this languishing Church of *Ephesus*: 'tis compounded of a threefold ingredient.

1. Self-Reflection, *Remember from, &c.*
 2. Holy contrition and humiliation before the Lord, *Repent.*
 3. Thorough Reformation, *Do thy first works.*
- I left the last time upon the second of these, namely, *Repentance*; and that which I did upon this part of Christs advice was, not so much to open to you the nature of Repentance (which is not so proper for this place) as to give in a catalogue

catalogue or list of such special sins, as Christ doth expect that all his people in these three Nations should lay to heart, and repent of before the Lord, I gave you in a list eleven special sins that we should repent of, and humble our selves for before the Lord. As

1. *Omission of duty*, Prayer, reading the Word, Meditation, &c. any thing will be for excuse to lay by duties, and we are secretly glad of an excuse.

2. *Remissness in duty*. In things of the world we are all in all, and all in every part; a man cannot thrust another thought into us; but in prayer, how many things are we doing?

3. *Hypocrisie*. How unlike are we at home to what abroad? and in company to what in secret?

4. *Pride*: In apparel, houses, parts, blood, birth-right, yea of grace it self, of humility, Ministers, Ordinances, &c.

5. *Covetousness*. Never did covetousness invade the professing party as now: The more goods men get, the less good they do.

6. *Sensuality*, Voluptuousness, wantonness. Christians let themselves loose to the Creature; lay out their affections on things below, as if part in the Serpents curse as well as their own.

7. *Animosities* and divisions among Christians; many have been active to kindle, but few to quench divisions.

8. *Uncharitable censuring one another*.

9. *Formality in duty*. Witness 1. Unprepared coming. 2. Unsuitableness of spirit to: And 3. want of reflection after duty, how we have spent, what we have gat; Sabbath, sacraments, comes

comes and goes, Monday morning finds us the same as before.

10. *Mis-spent Sabbaths.* Some prophane, others idle away the Sabbath, &c.

11. *Neglect of our Bibles* in our families and closets. I pray God it forego not some great evil coming upon you, as before the massacre in Germany it was observed, &c. I proceed.

12. The want of *mutual forbearance* among Christians. Alas Christians know not how to bear one with another in the least kind or measure. Oh the short-spiritedness among Christians, they cannot bear one anothers burdens, they cannot bear with one another. 'Tis very sad, that we that stand in need of so much forbearance, should express so little to our Brother: 'Tis an Argument *we know not of what spirit we are of* (as Christ told his Disciples.) Oh! how unlike to that God whom we profess to be our God? He is long-suffering, patient, full of goodness, gentleness, mercy, &c. we can bear nothing, we can suffer nothing one from another.

13. Our great *murmuring against Reformation and Reformers* (God hath heard the voice of our murmuring, *Exod. 16.*) As if there had been nothing that would have undone us but Reformation: and truly God seems to speak such a word as that was, *Numb. 7. 5.* in displeasure and anger, *I will make your murmurings to cease: I will take*

take away the cause of your murmuring: I would have reformed you, and you would not be reformed: As Christ to Jerusalem, *I would, but you would not: Mat. 23.* the time may come when we would, and God will not: when we shall cry, *Other Lords have had dominion over us, &c. Isai. 26. 13.* but thou Lord, set up thou thy government: rule thou over us: and God may say, *No, 'tis too late, I would have healed you, and you would not be healed.*

14. The great neglect of the care of our families. Truly 'tis not the least sin that threatens the removal of our Candlestick. How generally have the duties of Religion been let fall in our families, reading the Word, singing Psalms, &c. time was, when one could not have come through the streets in London on an evening in the week-day, but we might hear the praises of God, singing of Psalmes: now 'tis a stranger in the City, even upon the Lords own day. Oh! how have Governours of Families cast off the care of the souls that God hath committed to them? How careless are they of the souls of their *yoak-fellows* that lie in their bosomes, of their *children*, the fruit of their loins, *masters* of their *servants*, &c! And in the meantime are ready to stand up and justify themselves with the boldness of Cain, to say to God, *Am I my brothers keeper? Am I the keeper of my yoak-fellows, children, servants souls? Yes, thou art the keeper, &c.* God hath put them into thy trust, and if they perish through thy fault, *they may die in their sins, but their blood shall be required at thy hand.* God will say to thee as he did to Cain, *Thy brothers blood cryeth in my ear.*

15. Our *indifferences as to matter of faith and doctrine*: That we have not been more zealous for the Truth of Christ, that great trust and *depositum* which hath been committed to us: We have accounted it no matter of what opinion or judgement men be in these latter times. 'Tis an universal saying, *No matter what judgement men be of, so they be Saints*: as if *truth in the judgement* did not go to the making up of a Saint, as well as *holiness in the will and affections*: As if Christ had not come into the world to *bear witness of the truth*, which was his great design: as if it were no matter, if God have the heart, so the Devil be in the head: as if no matter that be full of darkness, so the heart be for God.

16. The *unsutableness of our conversations to the Gospel of Christ*: 'Tis the only thing the Apostle puts the *Philippians* in mind of, and commits to their care, *Phil. 1. 27.* and truly in these unhappy dayes it hath been the only thing men have neglected and despised: how little care that our conversations should honour the Gospel? &c.

17. Our *living by sense, and not by faith*. Surely (my Brethren) among all the sins in *England* that the people of God have cause to be humbled for, there is not any whereby we have more provoked God then by that sin of our unbelief: murmuring, and infidelity, have been our two great sins, for which, it is the wonder of Gods mercy that he hath not caused our carcases to fall in the wilderness: he may take up that complaint of us that he did of Israel, *Num. 14. 22.* *Because all those men which have seen my glory and my miracles which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these*
ten

ten times, and have not hearkned to my voice, surely they shall not see the land, &c. And this is the lamentation we may take up, that truly to this very day we have not faith enough to carry us from one miracle to another, from one deliverance to another, from one salvation to another: let one deliverance passe over our head, and no sooner one wave rises higher then another, but we are ready to cry out with *Peter*, *Lord save me, I perish*: and well were it if our fears did issue into teares, and cryes after *Christ*: we rather are ready to cry out, as those in *Ezek. 37. 11.* *Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost, we are cut off for our parts.* We are a people that never knew how to honour God in any distress: God hath brought us into; never learnt to glorifie God by believing: if we cannot see him, we cannot believe him: surely that which God hath done for us in such a succession of miracles, it might well at least have been food for our faith during our sojourning: In our pilgrimage we might have learned by all that we have seen to believe God: we might have made experience to be the food of our faith: and upon all the providences of divine Power, Wisdome and Goodness we might have discoursed our selves into belief, as *David*, *1 Sam. 17. 37.* *The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the Lion, and of the Bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.* So *Pau'*, *He hath delivered, and will deliver, we trust he will also deliver.*

Oh my Brethren! we dishonour God, and starve our faith, by forgetting our experiences,
while

while we proclaim by our own Unbelief, That we have a God that we dare not trust. If we perish we may thank our selves for it: surely if we miscarry, that account may be given for it that we find, *Mat. 13. 58. because of their unbelief.* There is a Rest of God before us; if we do not enter in, it is because of our unbelief.

18. *Want of sympathy with the bleeding, gasping, groaning, dying Churches of Jesus Christ.* They have been in great afflictions round about; have call'd unto us, Pity me! Oh! pity me my Friends! for the hand of God is gone out against me. We cannot look any way but we see cause of bitter mourning; but we have not laid the blood of *Germany, Lithuania, Piedmont, &c.* to heart; therefore God may justly lay it to our Charge. Want of fellow-feeling with our Brethren in their afflictions, it is a kind of Persecution, a kind of being accessarie to their Sufferings. That we have not mourned, wept, bled with them; that we have not lyen in the dust, smote on our thighs, &c. God may justly say to us, as *Am. 6. 6, 7. They shall go captive with the first that go captive, because they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.* The word in the *Hebrew* signifies, None of them have been sick for the affliction of *Joseph*: Oh my Brethren! when did we go to bed sick for the afflictions of Gods people abroad? when did their miseries cost us an hours sleep? or a meals meat? when did we lye in the dust and cry out, Ah Lord! their Glory? Because we have not shed tears for their blood, God may justly say, The next turn of *Persecution* shall be yours, Because you have not been afflicted in the afflictions of my people, &c.

19. *Our grievous unsensibleness of Gods Dishonour.* Religion never suffered the like as it hath done these latter daies by the *pride* and *hypocrisie* of some *pretenders* to it; Gods name hath been thereby blasphemed by an evil and hypocritical generation; the people of God have lyen under the greatest reproaches and contempts that ever any did under the Heavens; and yet all this while we have not been concerned in it: carried our selves as if unconcern'd in the reproaches of Religion; Blasphemies, reflected upon the name of God. Who, in these times of Blasphemy, have gone in secret? lyen in the dust? and cryed with holy *Ioshuah*, *What wilt thou do unto thy great name?* *Jol. 7. 4.* We have not laboured to preserve in our own Souls, or stir up in our Brethren a holy sence of Gods name, as those primitive Saints, *Mal. 3. 16.* Where are they that have been affected with, and afflicted for the sufferings of the name of God? Oh consider! how little is God and Religion beholden to us for our tears, sighes or groans? What is become of that Child-like spirit, that was wont to possess the spirits of Gods people? 'Tis perished; and with it, without special timely Repentance, we shall perish also.

20. *That Epidemical sinne of self-seeking, and self-pleasing.* Oh my Brethren! we may revive that complaint of the Apostle, *All seek their own, not the things which are Iesus Christs,* *1 Phil. 2. 21.* This, This hath been the source of all our miseries. While some had power in their hands to have done great things for God, what did they doe, but neglect the interest and trust in their hands, and sell a scattering
their

their own nests, and building to themselves Houses and Names, that they thought would continue for ever; and to divide the spoyle among themselves, as if their own game they hunted : and others in inferiour stations began to divide, and every one began to snatch, as if the dust of the earth would not serve every one for a handfull ; and in the mean time, a sea of Errour, like an inundation, hath been ready to overturn us. Yea, all men seeking to be pleased, not to please; whereas our dutie is, to study to please, not to be pleased, &c.

You see in all this I have not mentioned one of those grosse prophaneesses that stare Heaven in the face, as *Drunkeness*, filthy and abominable *Whoredome*, *Fornication*, poured out in every place, horrible *Blasphemy*, contempt of *God* and *Religion*, profanation of *Gods Sabbath*, &c. because I speak now to those that are *Professors*. I have been giving in a Catalogue of the sinnes of those that professe the name of Christ, that relate to Christ by a special Engagement and Relation; these have been the sinnes of Gods family. And if we would have God repent of the evil of *punishment*, we had need to make haste to repent of the evil of *sinne* : VVe have been a long time in sinning, we had need be a long in repenting. I tell you Christians, we have been these late 20. years doing nothing else but sinning against God; and should God let us live twenty years more, it would be too little to weep for the provocations thereof. Learn to lay these and other sinnes so to heart, that God may never lay them to your charge.

The third advice Christ gives here for the prevention of the removal of her Candlestick, is Reformation, [*do the first works.*] Reformation, that indeed is a fruit and evidence of sound Repentance: Repentance is nothing else but the breaking of the heart *for* and *from* sinne.

I have spoken of it merely as it is the contrition of the Soul for sinne; I come to speak a word of the other part, as it consists in *turning to God*, and *doing our first works*.

This is the method God prescribes his people, *Lam.* 3. 39. *Wherefore doth a living man complain, &c.* under Gods afflicting hand, instead of *reforming*? Men are prone to fall a complaining, not only *naturally*, as Irrational creatures may under some pinching extremity; but *sinfully*, i.e. when their *natural* grief is let out in a distempered and inordinate manner; when *natural* groanes are accompanied with *unscriptural* affections, which vents it self

1. Sometimes upon the *affliction*, as if but one intolerable burden in the world, and God must needs lay that upon them. *Lam.* 1. 12. & 3. 1. & 7. 10.

2. Sometimes of *instruments*; thus *Esau* complains of his brother; is he not rightly called *Jacob* a *Supplanter*? of his Father, *hast thou but one blessing, &c.* *Gen.* 27. 3. 4. of any thing rather than of himself; he doth not say, *Am I not rightly called Esau? What a wretch am I that have despised and sold my blessing?* Mostly we complain of that which deserves no blame, the *guilty* of the *innocent*; 1 *Kings* 18. 7. *Isa.* 10. 5.
Jer.

Ier. 8. or we pore too much upon *second causes*; or complain of instruments; not of our selves, or of wicked men, not of wickedness; of their Cruelty, more than of their Blasphemy; of their injuries against us, more than as Gods enemies; or more of revenge in our Complaints, than murmuring; our complaints concerning their afflicting us, not accompanied with our prayers for their Conversion, &c.

3. Sometimes of *God himself*, not as one of his Children, who complains

1. To God, not of God; thus Christ, *My God, my God, &c.*

2. With a holy Confidence, *my God, my God*; two words of *faith*, for one word of *fear*, &c.

3. In his Complaints, is very tender of Gods glory; affraid to think or speak a hard or uncomely thought or word of God.

4. Carefully distinguishes between what God doth, and what man doth; observes and separates the *unrighteousness* of men from the *righteousness* of God.

5. With humble inquiry what *cause* may be of his dispensation, *Iob 10. 2. & 34. 31.*

6. With a disposition to bring up his will to God; not that God should bring down his will to him; if it be possible let this *Cup pass*; however, glorifie thy *name*, provide for thy *own glory*, and do with *me* as *thou pleasest*. But as a *sinfull Creature*, sometimes ready to call *Providence in question*, *Ez. 8. 12.* or to break forth and charge God foolishly, either of too much *severity*, *Ez. 18. 2, 25.* or of too long *delay*, *Is. 49. 14.* or their *mournings* are turned into *murmurings*, *Num. 14. 27.* or their *complaints* are mixed with *unbelief*, *Pf. 78. 19.* or of

their punishment ; not of their sinne ; and nothing will satisfie them but *deliverance*.

Now this is not the way ; for this way of complaining is ,

1. *Fruitleffe* ; a House on Fire is not quenched with tears ; Murmuring will not scatter the Clouds.

2. *Causeless* ; Thou hast thy life for a prey, *Ier. 4* 5, 6. What a *living man* and *complain*, and that when 'tis for the punishment of his *sinnes* ? this kind of *complaining* is *causeless* ; if you compare *sinne* and *punishment* together , there's no proportion ; for *sinne* is a transgression against an infinite God ; *punishment* but an affliction upon the finite Creature : *Sinne* is an evil against God ; *punishment* an evil against the Creature : Or , if you consider *what sinne is* in its nature , 'tis a *contrariety* to Gods nature ; (God is holy ; Sinne impuritie) A contradiction to Gods wills ; (God saith, *Do this* ; the Sinner saith, *I will not* : God saith, *Do not this abominable thing which I hate* ; the Sinner saith , *I will* :) 'Tis the transgression of Gods pure and holy Law ; nay , 'tis a practical blaspheming against all the *names of God* ; the *rape* of Gods *mercy*, and the *dare* of Gods *justice*, the *challenge* of Gods *power* ; Sinne gives the *lie* to Gods *truth*, and the *fool* to Gods *wisdome*. And what can Sinne do more than to take away Gods *good name* ? Gods *being* ? and that, Sin would do. Or , 'tis *causeless*, if you consider against whom sinne is, *i. e. God himself*, who is a *jealous* God ; now a Sinner takes another Lover into his bosome before his eyes ; yea he is a *holy, righteous, merciful, almighty, living God* : Thoughts of this
may

may well keep us from complaining. Indeed, whatever our affliction be, we have as much cause to give thanks as to mourn; whether you consider, whatever the punishment be, it might be worse; or do but look well into it, you will see more Mercie than Affliction, *Psal. 119. 75.*

3. *Sinfull.* There is in it, 1. *unthankfulness*; while we complain of one Affliction, we overlook a thousand Mercies; whereas true Grace is ingenuous, and can see a little Kindness mingled with a great deal of Severity. The Church of God in captivité comparing her *afflictions* with her *mercies*, breaks forth, *It is of the Lords mercy that we are not consumed*, Lam. 3. 22. blessed be God, 'tis not yet so bad, but it might be worse; 2 Cor. 4. 8. *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed*: though laid wāt for, beset on everie side, put to strive and struggle, yet we escape; God gives an issue in the Temptation: *we are perplexed, but not in despair*; we are not so helpless that we know not whither to turn our selves; we have a God to go to, as bad as things are; the name of the Lord is a strong tower: *persecuted, but not forsaken*; we are shaken out, but not to shivers; persecuted, but not conquered; our God hath not utterly forsaken us: *Cast down, but not destroyed*, Ps 118. 13. we are cast down, but not cast off. Thus Luth: r, *They may thrust me back, but they cannot thrust me down; they may crush me, but they cannot kill me: or, they may kill me, but they cannot hurt me; they may shew their teeth, but they can't devour.* Is it a Feaver? it might have been eternal flames; Is it Scarcity? there might be universal famine; Is it the danger of losing the Gospel? 'tis the mercy of God it is not done already: Are we in

Captivity? we might have been in Hell; are we in Prison? it might have been *Tophet*: *The Lord hath chastened me sore, but he hath not given me over unto death.* Pl. 118. 18. Though men have lost their Bowels, Gods *compassions* fail not; God's as faithfull as ever; he hath taken away some of our mercies, but he hath not taken away all; he hath left us more than he hath taken: They are new, they are renewed every morning; when old mercies are spent, God sends us new; he is *the Father of Mercies*, begets new mercies every moment. VWho can number or measure his mercies of one day? whatever our Fears are, Oh blessed be God, he loads us with mercies.

Now the *Complainer* overlooks all these; there's much unthankfulness in it, and that a kind of Atheisme, *She knew not that I gave her corn and wine, &c. Hos.* 2. 8.

2. *Pride*; only by *pride* comes *contention*; men never quarrel with God about their Condition, but 'tis long of the *pride* of their heart. Proud man would fain sinne, and not hear from God; would take liberty to sinne, but would not have God take liberty to punish, *Isay* 8. 3. God must take notice of our Duties, not of our Sins. God shall hear of it, if he take not notice of our *prayers*; but it shall be by complaining if he take notice of our *sinnes*. A proud man whatever he *hath*, it no more than his *due*; and whatever he *wants*, God's his *debtor*, *Hosea* 6. 1.

The want of a Complement undoeth them in the midst of honour : If we want but one thing our hearts would have , surely nature is proud and ready to pick quarrels with God on the least occasion ; nay if he will not give that mercy we would , take all, &c.

3. Rebellion ; God strikes him for sin , he strikes against God ; *Ier.* 31. 18. God draws one way , and he another , &c.

4. *Unbelief.* He that complains of his punishment, never believed sin to be so great an evil , or God to be such a One as revealed in the Word.

5. Interpretative *Blasphemy* :

1. While we dispute our afflictions , and wrangle with the present dispensation , what is it but to make our selves wiser than God ? We seem to tell God how it might have been better , and so we do as it were give God Counsel : When he calls for Obedience , is not that Blasphemy to set up our wisdom against Gods?

2. While we complain of Punishment , we take sins part against God ; we do as it were justify sin, and judge God : God is unrighteous to punish such a sin as this with such grievous Afflictions.

3. By Complaining we do as it were summon God to our Bar , to come and give an account of his action at our Tribunal. What poor miserable Creatures

tures are we, that in our Afflictions are so far from helping our selves, that we commonly adde to our own misery!

7 No Affliction is intolerable, till sin come in it.

The yoke God hath made easie, we make intolerable, and make God to be our enemy, while he by Affliction would become our friend.

Now this being found not to be the way; that which God counsels and advises, is,

1. Self Examination: [*Let us seach and try our wayes.*] Sin and Hypocrisie lies close and deep; therefore we must take pains, dig to the bottom, set up a Tribunal in our own Conscience, summon, try, judge our selves over and over, in Gods presence: He stands at our Closet Doores, to hear what we will say, *Jer. 8. 6.* before execution; what Indictments we will bring in against our selves.

We can tell what such a Drunkard, such an unclean person, &c. hath done; but no man saith, | What have I done? My pride, my unthankfulnesse, my unfruitfulnesse, &c.

2. Reformation. [*and turn again to the Lord.*] Sin is *aversio a Deo & conversio ad creaturam*, Reformation is a turning again from the creature to God.

3. Frequent and fervent prayer: [*Let us lift up*] There's the frequency, lets do nothing else but pray;
lets

lets be continually lifting up our prayers; make your houses houses of prayer: Thus *David*, *Thou soughtest against me without a Cause* (Did he take Council against Princes to be disloyal? To take up Arms? No.) *But I gave my self unto prayer*, *Psal. 109. 4.* Therefore if you prayed before, now do nothing else; it notes habitual and constant prayer. [Our Hearts with our Hands] to crave, and as it were to pull down mercy, as if we would wrestle with God, and say, *Nay, I will not let thee go, until thou blesse me*, *Gen. 32. 26.* it notes our fervency: And for our encouragement, it is [Unto God in the Heavens.] which expresses his Sovereignty, Omniscieny, Omnipotency, Everlastingness, &c.

4. Judging our selves, or Confession of sin [*We have transgressed.*]

5 Aggravating our sins [*and have rebelled*] i. e. we have turned sin into Rebellion; Rebellion hath been the aggravation of our sins; we have sinned against the clearest light, dearest love, &c. *Nehem. 9. Ezra 9. Dan. 9.*

6. Justifying God [*thou hast not pardoned.*] A word, not of murmuring, complaining, or accusing God of hard dealing; but by way of justifying God; we have transgressed, therefore thou hast not pardoned: Why should'st thou repent of the evil of punishment, when we have not repented of the evil of sin? Thou hast punished us lesse then our Iniquities deserve.

So in the Text [*Do the first works*] Sin is a departure from God; Repentance a coming back again to God. Turn thou to him from whom the Children of Israel have deeply revolted. The soul hath many turnings and windings; but there's the best motion of all when the Soul (with the Dove) returns to God, from whom it came.

Apostacy is the losse of our *first love*: Repentance is the Recovery of it, and Reformation is the *doing* of our *first works*. I have not time to enlarge as I desire; I shall onely offer a few things, that might help to quicken you to this great duty.

My Brethren, we have no great cause to boast of *Englands first love*: Never so good as it should be, yet many can remember when *England* hath been much better then tis.

Time was, when Doctrines have been more sound; *Discipline* more exercised for the suppressing of sin and profanenesse; *Ordinances* kept more pure from sinful mixtures; when *London* kept *Sabbaths* better then now; loved their *Godly Ministers* more then now; honoured them that were set over her, for their works sake; would have thought nothing too good for a faithful Minister; when Christians loved one another with a deare hearty-servent love; when there was lesse *Complement*, but more real love and affection among Christians; when Christians improved their meetings, converse, Christian Conference, and other soul duties to better purpose then now; not to foolish

lish disputations, or wanton sensual excesses, but to their mutual edification; when they improved their time for comparing their evidences, communicating their experiences, and building up one another in their most holy faith; when there was more Industry in Professors then now, to bring in *Converts*; when private Christians thought it their duty to be subservient to the vvorke of their *Ministers*, to bring in others to Christ, especially their Family.

Time vvas vwhen more care of *Young Converts* then novv; vwhen none could have looked out after Religion, but some or other ready to lend them their hand, and shew them the vway, explaining it clearly to them; but novv *Young Converts* may be snapt into separations and errour, and none looks after them.

Time vvas vwhen more care of the truly godly poor; vwhen errour vvas more odious; vwhen Popery vvas more hated then novv; vwhen the name of a Toleration vwould have made Christians to have trembled; vwhen Christians vvere better acquainted vwith their Bibles; vwhen more time spent in secret prayer; vwhen more tender of one anothers Names and Honours, vwould heal one anothers Reputations, and vwould spread the lap of Charity over those misreports and scandals that might be cast upon them; vwhen Christians rejoyced more in one anothers good, and mourned in one anothers sufferings; vwhen Christians did more earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints, &c.

Oh do you, not onely *your first works*, but our *fore-fathers first works*: Be as zealous for God and his truths, as tender, mutually careful of one another and as they.

Our fears be very great, and truly our provocations be greater; our dangers are great, but our sins greater: yet herein are vve comforted, that there is precious ointment, that yet there is *Balm in Gilead*, Phisick of Christs ovvn composition, for the reviving and healing of a back-sliding people. Christians Christ Jesus is become your Phisician, he hath prescribed you a potion made up of these three ingredients, *Self Deflection, Holy Contrition, Thorow Reformation*. Christians, novv take this Receipt, Christ advises you, if you vvill not, there is no vvay but one, *Or else I will come unto thee quic'ly, and will remove thy Candlestick.*

There is yet a means or tvvo I find in Scripture for the preventing of threatned ruin that hath been very near, that God hath prescribed for a people or person in great danger, vvhen ready to be cut off and destroyed.

Novv that vvhich I vvould commend to you, in reference to vvhat you vvould beg of God for *England*, is,

First, In your addressing your self to God for that mercy your souls are set upon, and you vvrestle vvith God for, that you vvould make some special Vovv to God. I find the Saints have done so; vvhen reduced to great Straits, not knowving vvhat to do: Thus

Jacob

Jacob vowed a Vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my fathers house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God. And this Stone which I here set for a pillar, shall be Gods house. Gen. 28. 20, 21, 22.

The special thing Jacob vowed, is, that he would continue in the pure worship of his fore-fathers, that he would still honour God as his God, in that way he would be worshipped; the special thing is, that he would build a house for the worship of God; here he would erect a place of publick worship. And thus Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, *If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their Cities. Num. 21. 2.* They vowed a vow they would not spare any of the enemies of God, if he would deliver them into their hands. Thus *Jephthah, Hannah, David, &c. Judg. 11. 30. 1 Sam. 1. 11. Psal. 132. 1, 2.* Certainly in times of great distress, tis not improper or uncomely, but that which God may expect and take well, that you make some special Vow, if God would prevent your fears; if God would continue forfeited mercies, dearer to you then your lives, you would set apart some special thing for God, something for the propagation of the Gospel abroad, for the maintenance of a godly ministry at home, for setting up the preaching of the Gospel in the dark corners of the Kingdom, &c. This must have some cautions with it; as,

1. We must be sure our Vow be of what is in our own power; we must not make vows of that which is none

none of our own. *I hate Robbery for burnt offerings.*

We must not make a vow to God of that which hath been unjustly or unrighteously taken away, or withheld from any. 'Tis *Sacriledg* instead of a *Sacrifice*.

2. It must be of things warrantable and justifiable by the Word.

3. It must be of such things that we are not bound to do, before vows, by the standing Obligation of Religion, and of our Profession; but of something that is in our own choice, that we will *voluntarily* make a free-will offering of to God.

4. We must take heed that we do not entertain a superstitious thought of our own vows, as if we had merited a mercy at Gods hands by our vows; God looks for some special vow at our hands, that we may shew how much we prize and value the mercy we would have, that we would be content to part with any thing, though to the halfe of our Estate for it.

2. Another thing I find, is, that in the mean time we should do something by way of extraordinary bounty and charity to the relief of Gods indigent Servants. Thus the Prophet *Daniel*, Wherefore, O King, let my counsel be acceptable to thee; break off thy Sins by Righteousnesse, and thine Iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity, Dan. 4. 27.

The Prophet advises him to break off his Sinnes by Righteousnesse, there's Reformation; and besides Reformation, that he would do something in an extraordinary way to the relief of the poor. *Mercy to the poor, what's that?*

Interpreters conceive, by the *poor* here, he understands *Gods poor*, i.e. the poor Jews, that were now in the *Babylonian captivity*; he advises he would do something by way of sympathy to the Jews, to ease their yokes and oppressions; break off thy Iniquities by pitying & shewing mercy to thy poor Captives under thy power now at this time; take off their yoke, ease their burdens, and restore them to their liberties again. Thus do you; and those that have been the instruments of your Conversion, or Edification, set apart something extraordinarie for their relief and supply. The Prophet *Daniel* seems to advise this to the King as it were, by way of satisfaction.

There be two things in Repentance; in wrongs we have done there must be Confession, and Satisfaction or Restoration: He seems to advise this to make up compleat Repentance; namely, to make Restoration and Retribution of what he had injuriously taken from the Jewes. Oh then! let me say, without breach of Charity, that whatsoever, except it be in this case of extraordinary supplies for his poor, it will be found but making Restitution and Satisfaction. It may be upon a two-fold ground.

1. With some it may be truly Restitution and Restoration of what he hath *taken away* by *unjust means*, God knows how; that's between God and their own Souls, what unlawfull means hath been used to augment the heap, and swell their Estate.

If there be any that hears me this day, whose Consciences shall tell them, that they have increased their Estate by undue and unwarrantable means; Oh *Restore, Restore, break off your Iniquities by shewing mercy, &c.* by making Reparation as you can; it will be but like *Zacheus* giving half his goods to the poor, and restoring four-fold, &c. in a liberal Contribution to the poor.

2. It will be Restitution in another sence, in reference to an *unjust withholding*; some have have got injuriously, and I am afraid too too many have kept injuriously: Have we not *rob'd* the poor by an unjust denying of what God hath commanded us to distribute to their necessities? *there is that withholdeth more than is meet, &c. Prov. 3. 17. & 11. 24.* It may be God hath given you so much; there's Gods share, there's the Ministers portion, &c. Now all that you have withheld beyond the *Rule of Scripture*, is all *stolen goods*, and is like a Wheat-sheat on fire, will burn down the whole barne of corn.

That which I would exhort you to, is, every one to set apart some considerable part of your Estate, and account it as a hallowed thing, dedicated to God, as a
thing

thing which to touch were Sacriledge; that you may be ready on all occasions, in all regular and due wayes, to bring out for the relief of the Poor; you know objects abounding in every place, and you may expect warrantable means for dispenccing of what God shall put into your hearts in this matter.

K 2

SER-



SERMON VI.

JOHN 8. 29.

*And he that sent me, is with me :
the Father hath not left me a-
lone : for I doe alwayes those
things that please him.*

I Was upon these words in the morning; having spoken something to them as they referre to Christ who spake them here of himself; I then brought them down to his Members, Believers : and so propounded this Observation from them, *That whoever they are that desire to please God, to do the things that are pleasing to him,*

him, God will be with such, and the Father will not leave such alone, especially in a time of suffering and trouble.

In the prosecuting of this point I spake to four things, which I shall not now repeat, but come to the mark which I intend at present; and that is, to make some Application.

1. Let me endeavour to prevail with every one of you, so to carry your selves in your several places and capacities, that whatever you do, you may please God.

It was a blessed testimony that was given of *Enoch, Heb. 11. 6. Before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.* Oh! how happy will they be at the great day of Judgement, who shall be singled out by Christ, before Angels and men; and Christ shall say of them, This was the Man, or this was the Woman that pleased God: There is a great deal of pleasing in the World, but there are but very few that make this their businessse, to please God; therefore I would have you shun that which is sinfull, and presse after that which is matter of Duty,

1. There are some that mind nothing but to please themselves, to promote their own interest, to love their own ease, to indulge themselves in their own carnal delights; but they never mind the good of others, or the pleasing of God; the Apostle speaks of and against these, *Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3.*

2. There are others that look no further than the pleasing of men; if they can but keep fair with men. and
shun

shun the displeasure of men, that is all they aime at; but my Brethren, what a poor thing is it to please man, and displease God? what a poor thing is it to have Man to be your Friend, and God to be your Enemy! to have the smiles of a poor dying perishing Worme, and to lye under the frownes of the great God!

Indeed there is a good pleasing of men, to please them for their Edification, as the Apostle speaks, *Rom. 15. 2.* and so the Apostle speaks of himself, *1 Cor. 10. 32. Even as I please all men in all things*, that is, in all things that are of an indifferent nature, not simply civil, nor simply good, in all such things.

This Apostle was of a yie'ding and complying spirit, that he might thereby the better insinuate himself into the affections of men, and be more instrumental to the glory of God in the work of the Gospel, *1 Cor. 9. 22. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some; and this I do for the Gospel's sake.*

But now in matter of Dutie, such things as are expressly determined by God, and so are either good or evil; in these things the Apostle would be no pleaser of men: *If I should please men, I should not be the Servant of Christ; 1 Gal.* It is good to please others to their Edification; but we must not please others to their own ruine and condemnation; It is good to please men, when we can so do and not grieve God.

Instead of pleasing men, let it be your constant care and best endeavour in all things to please God: my Brethren this is a duty of so great importance, that was I now to take my leave of you, and should certainly know that I

should never speak to you more , as we are come very near to that; for though I speak to you as a living man; yet I speak to you as a dying Minister; this I say, is a duty of that weight and importance, that I know not what to presse upon you more material than this; consult but two places of Scripture, *Col. 3. For this cause we do not cease to pray for you* : What was the thing the Apostle in this his constant Prayer did begge of God for them? It was this, That they might please God; and when he was taking his leave in the winding up of his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, *Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Iesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight.*

I need not go beyond the Text for Motives to stirre you up to these Endeavours : For

Motive 1. First, Consider what that God is which I would have you endeavour to please, He is that God which made Heaven and Earth; that God before whom all this World is as nothing, but as a little dust in the ballance, and as a drop of water to the bucket; that God whom Angels adore and worship; that God who by a word from his mouth is able to bring the whole Universe into nothing. Will not you study to please this God? But further, consider what this God is to you: He is the fountain of your being; he is the God of all your mercies; he is your Creatour and Sovereign; he is your Maker and Law-giver. It is he that by a smile can make you happy, and by a frowne can make you miserable; it is he that hath Heaven and Hell

at his disposal, *who openeth and none can shut, who shuts and none can open.* He that must judge every one of you either to eternal blessednesse, or else to eternal torments; it is he in whose hands your breath, your life, your soul, your All is will you not endeavour to please this God? as the Prophet argueth in point of fear, *Isay 51. 12. Who art thou that art afraid of a man that shall dye, or of the Son of man that shall be made as grasse, and forgettest the Lord thy maker?* Oh poor Creature, who art thou that goest about to please a mortal dying man, and dost not go about to please the Great God, thy Creatour and Sovereigne!

2. Consider that Relation wherein you profess your selves to stand to God; he is your Master, you his Servants; he is your Father, you his Children; he is your Lord, you his Subjects: You know all that are in close Relations, will study to please them that are above them, as the Servant his Master, the Child his Father, the Subject his Prince; All persons that are in a state of Inferiority, will study to please their Superiours, especially when they do depend upon them. Oh! how infinitely is God above those Relations! Alas, there is but a very little distance betwixt you and your Servants, and yet you expect they should please you; will you not therefore please God? especially considering your dependence upon him.

3. You shall not lose by pleasing God; that is enough to put us upon this; He that pleaseth God, profiteth himself; in that very act wherein we please God,
we

we profit our selves : Men can do but little for us, and yet upon what they can do, we study to please them.

Let me open this in a few particulars:

1. If you will sincerely endeavour in all things to please God, God will give you a gracious return to all your prayers. Oh what a mercy is this for a man to have his prayers answered by God ! 1 *John* 3. 22. *Whatever we aske, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.* Never expect that God should hear any Prayers, if we do not endeavour to do those things that please him.

2. Do you please God, and he will please you; Mercy pleaseth us, and Duty pleaseth God. Now when we please God in a way of Duty, he will please us in a way of Mercy: If we order our wayes so as to please God, he will order his wayes so as to please us.

3. Great is the benefit of pleasing God, even as to men; and this Solomon sets before you, *Prov.* 16. 7. *When a mans wayes please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him;* and he hath such another expression, *Prov.* 22. 11. *He that loveth pureness of heart, the King shall be his Friend:* the meaning of this Scripture is this, When we keep close to God, and walk in compliance with his will, and make it our great design to please him, He will give us to find favour in the eyes of men: He that maketh God his Friend, God will make that mans Enemies to be his Friends. Men are possibly full of Anger, Revenge, and

Exaspe-

Exasperation: be it so: Do you desire to please God? God can turne their Hearts towards you; God can sweeten them in their Spirits, and take away that Venome that is in them: so you know he did in the Case of *Esau* to his Brother *Jacob*.

4. This is the way to Heaven and Happines; God will be pleased before the Sinner shall be saved. *Heb. 11.* *Enoch before his translation had this testimony that he pleased God*; there is no way to Heaven but by this way: the Childe pleaseth the Father, and then the Father giveth him the Inheritance. So it is here.

5. Let me return to the Argument in the Text: God will never leave them alone, that desire sincerely to please him. Methinks this should be a very prevailing Motive to you, especially now; Please God, and he will never leave you, no not in a time of distress and trouble. Here is the great difference betwixt a faithfull God, and a false Man.

In time of trouble and adversity men leave us and forsake us; in time of prosperity then they flatter us, and pretend a great deal of friendship and kindness: But as no man looks upon the Dial when the Sunne is under a cloud; so these very men that pretend so much of kindness and friendship, if so be we do but come under a frown, or into trouble, then their friendship and kindness is at an end, as *Paul* said; No man stood by him when he came to be tryed before *Nero*; all men forsook him, but God did not forsake him. The wise man hath an expression, *Prov. 17. 17.* *A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity*; But where shall we find such a friend? and indeed where shall

shall we find such a brother? But now if you will please God, God will stand by you when all men leave you; When you have the greatest need of God, he will then stand by you; If you be in a Prison, he will be with you; If you be banished, he will be with you: If Sinne doth not part God and you, certainly no Affliction shall part God and you.

Studie to please God; Oh! is it not a sad thing for God to leave you? that is the saddest of all; when we lose God, we lose all, *Hos. 9. 12. VVo unto them when I depart from them.* What are all the mercies if God leave you? no more than if a man should have a fair pleasant House, and never see the Sunne more.

Oh do the things that alwayes please the Lord, and he will never leave you; under mercies, under afflictions he will be with you, and then your mercies shall be verie sweet, and your afflictions shall not be very bitter; You know how earnest *Moses* was, *Num. 10. 81.* with his Father in law, *Hobab the Midianite,* *Leave us not I pray thee, forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayst be to us as eyes.* Oh keep God to you, especially when you are entering into the wilderness of trouble, God will be to you instead of eyes; he will be your Counsellor, your Comforter, your Guide, your Treasure, your Portion, your All.

I might adde one thing more in the last place.

Studie to please God, because he is so easie to be pleased; this is a motive to us to endeavour to please those

those persons who are easie to be pleased; a Childe that hath a Father that is easie to be pleased, a Servant that hath a Master that is easie to be pleased, will study to please them. Sincerity pleaseth God, though in the midst of much infirmity; He is so gracious and mercifull, that wheresoever a poor sinner doth but desire to please God, he will accept of those desires; If we can but please God, it is no great matter whether we please men or not.

I shall conclude this branch with *1 Thes. 4. 1. We beseech you brethren, and exhort you in the Lord Iesus, that as you have received of us how you ought to walke and please God, that you would abound more and more.*

Use 2. By way of direction I should here shew you how you are to please God. I told you in general in the morning this pleasing of God lyeth in two things.

1. In suitableness to his Nature.

2. In subjection to his Law.

If you would please God in all your Actions, look to this, That what you doe may bear some resemblance to his Nature, and hold forth obedience to his Law.

Consult the will of God, and in all things act in conformity to that will; doe not allow your selves in the Commission of any known sinne, for that will certainly displease God; as it was said of *David* when he took *Bethsheba* to Wife: but sayth the
Text,

Text, *the thing displeased the Lord.* Do not haue any known duty, for that will displease God.

In a word, be holy in all manner of Conversation.

This being too general, I shall not insist upon it; only in a word more particularly,

Do those things now, make Conscience of those Duties which now lye upon you, in the doing of which you will certainly please God: And they are such as these:

Be stedfast in the good wayes of God; in the midst of a backsliding and apostatizing age, stand fast to the law of God, *Phil. 4. 1. Contend for the faith which is delivered to the Saints,* the 3d. Verse of the Epistle of *Jude.*

Be not ashamed to own Christ before all the World; if you be ashamed of him on Earth, he will be ashamed of you in heaven; and woe be to that Sinner whom Christ is ashamed to own.

Reckon Reproaches for the Name of Christ better than the pleasure of sinne that is but for a season.

When God calleth you to it, assert the purity and spirituality of Gospel-worship; Do not place Religion in a few Shadowes where the Substance is neglected; but chiefly mind Self-denial, Mortification, Crucifixion

on to the World, keeping up close Communion with God.

Love the people of God whatever the World say or think of thee; for God is highly pleased when he seeth his Children loved.

Keep up Religion in your Families, whatever scorn or contempt is cast upon you. Oh that you would labour to be of *Abrahams* spirit; *I know*, sayth God, *he will command his Children and his Household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord*, Gen. 18. 19.

I do not know any one better means for the keeping up of Religion in this Nation, than for Masters of Families to be consciencious in the discharging of this Duty.

Be good in bad times; be Patterns of good works to those that shall behold you.

Let no Reproach or Obloquy make you to abate your exact walking with God; whatever you meet withall in the ways of Holynesse and a strict life, say, If this be to be vile, I will be more vile.

Make Conscience of a strict observation of the Lords day; take heed of that Sacrilege of stealing away holy time; of prostituting that to common and civil use, which is impropriated and dedicated to the service of God.

Pray

Pray for , and love all those that have been instrumental for your spiritual good in the work of the Ministry , whatever dirt is now thrown in their Faces, and though you never get more good by them.

Forget not to distribute to the necessities of Gods people , that are many of them in a low condition ; for this is a sacrifice of a sweet Odour , and well pleasing to him.

Carry your selves with all Patience and Christian meeknesse towards them that wrong you : Pray for them that are your Enemies ; and when you are reviled, revile not again , but commit your selves to that God which judgeth Righteously.

Do your Duty to your Superiours, and to those that are in Authority.

So carry your selves , that it may be with you as it was with *Daniel* ; they had nothing against him, saving in the matter of his God.

Bauk not any Duty for suffering : Choose the greatest of Suffering, before the least of Sinne.

In a word, So walk as it becommeth the Gospel : And finally , I speak to you, as the Apostle spake to them, *Phil. 2. 16. Holding forth the word of life , that I may rejoyce in the day of Christ, that I have not runne in vain, nor laboured in vain.*

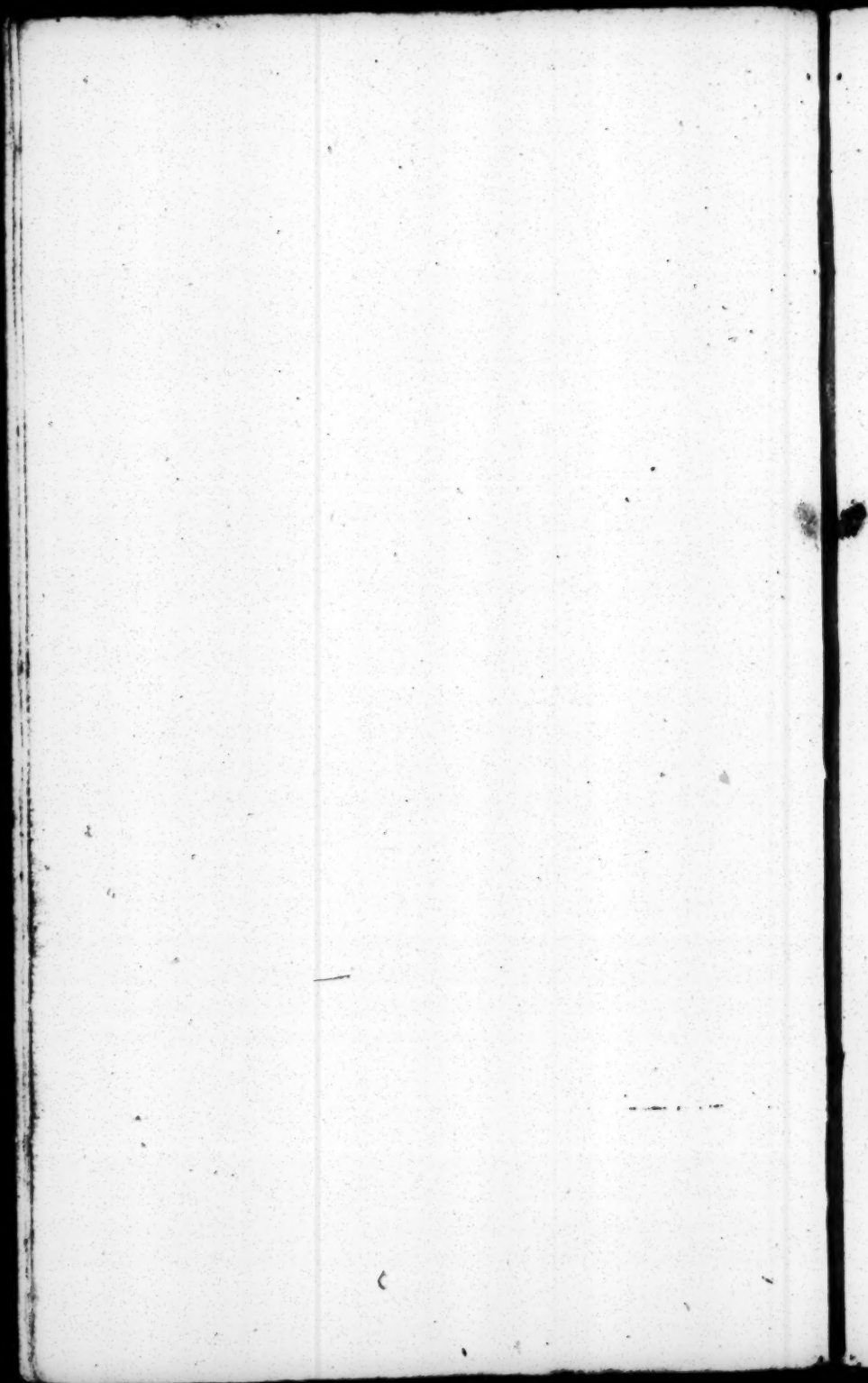
The third use is for comfort, to all those that do conscientiously endeavour in all things to please God; the comfort lies in this, you may suffer; but whenever you suffer, the father will not leave you alone; pleasing of God does not secure a man from suffering from men, sometimes it rather exposes a man to suffer from men: But now, though it does not prevent suffering, yet it takes away the sting and venom of suffering; it makes it to be like *Sampsons* Lyon; when it was slain he found nothing but honey in the belly of it; Oh! the presence of God in a time of affliction is exceeding precious, it turns gall into honey, thornes into roses. Be not troubled in your thoughts about what you may undergo; if God be with you, all will be well; if God comes when the crosse cometh, the weight of it shall never hurt you; what is a prison when God is there. My brethren, though estate leave you, relations leave you, all your comforts leave you; so long as God doth not leave you, it will be well; therefore do not fear, be not dejected, or discouraged. *Isa. 43. 1, 2. Fear not, O Jacob; why so? when thou passest through the water, I will be with thee:* We have more reason to be afraid of prosperity, with Gods absence; then of adversity, with Gods presence. A good God will make every condition to be good; it is not a prison but a pallace; where God is, they that do the things that please God, whatever condition they may be brought to, the Father will not leave them alone. Ministers may leave you, the means of Grace and Ordinances in a great measure may

leave you, your creature enjoyments and comforts may leave you ; but here is a God that will never leave you ; oh ! bless his holy name.

Fourthly, is this pleasing of God a duty of so great importance, and benefit ? Then be tender and charitable in judging of those that do differ from you and others, upon this account, because they dare not displease God. I may in this caution, aime at my self, and others of my brethren in the work of our ministry ; but I am not here at present to take my last farewell ; I hope I may have a little further opportunity of speaking to you ; but if not, let me require this of you, to pass a charitable interpretation upon our laying down the exercise of our ministry ; there is a greater judge than you, must judge us all at the great day ; and to this judge, we can appeal before Angels and Men ; that it is not this thing, or that thing, that puts us upon this dissent, but it is conscience towards God, and fear of offending him. I censure none that differ from me, although they displease God ; but yet, as to my self, should I do thus and thus, I should certainly violate the peace of my own conscience, and offend God, which I must not do ; no, not to secure my ministry ; though that either is, or ought to be, dearer to me than my very life ; and how dear it is, God only knoweth. Do not add affliction to affliction, be not uncharitable in judging of us, as if through pride, faction, obstinacy or devotedness to a party, or which is worse than all, in opposition to authority, we do dissent ; the judge of all hearts knows it is not so

But it is nearly from those apprehensions which after prayer, and the use of all means, do yet continue; that doing thus and thus, we should displease God; therefore deal charitably with us, in this day of our affliction. If we be mistaken, I pray God to convince us; if others be mistaken, whither in a publick or private capacity, I pray God in mercy convince them; but however things go, God will make good this truth to us; in this work he will not leave us, and our father will not leave us alone; for it is the unsained desire of our soul, in all things to please God;

FINIS.





S E R M O N V I I I .

C O L O S . 2 . 6 , 7 .

*As ye have therefore received
Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk
in him,*

*Rooted and built in him, and
stablished in the faith, as ye
have been taught, abounding
therein with thanksgiving.*



Mitting the division, and in part
the opening of the words, the ob-
resvation is this; That those that
have received Christ Jesus the
Lord, must accordingly be rooted,
built up in him, and stablished in the faith; and
L 3 walk

walk in him as they have been taught, and abound herein with thanksgiving.

This *receiving* of *Christ* signifies to believe in him. It is not only to receive his *Doctrine* or *Benefits*, but to receive his *Person*, to receive him as related to us; for the uses and end for which he came into the world, and for which he offers himself to souls by the preaching of the Gospel. *Sinners* have lost and undone themselves; *Christ* comes to be the *Physitian* of souls; he will not save the *unwilling* and *despisers* of his *grace*, while they continue in their *unwillingness*. He will save them by the way of *covenant*; while he consents and tenders them his *grace*, he will have them consent to the terms of his *covenant*. The consent of the heart exprest by our covenanting with him, is this receiving of *Jesus Christ*. He is willing to be our *Physitian*, and when we take him to be so, we receive him. He is willing to save us from the guilt and power of sin, willing to be our Lord, Head Intercessor with God, Justifier and all unto us; and if we consent to this, and take him as offered, this is receiving *Christ*; with whom his benefits are also received, the remission of sins, indwelling, renewing, comforting spirit, title to everlasting life, &c. In the receiving *Christ* all this is received.

Receiving of *Christ* contains these two things; or these two things are essentially contain'd

tain'd to make up the nature of saving faith; *i. e.* to believe the doctrine of the Gospel concerning Jesus Christ to be true, and to consent that the goodness that is therein revealed and proposed shall be ours. To believe what Christ *is*, and what he hath *done*; so far to believe it as herewe are resolv'd to venture our souls, (though there may be some weakness through our faith's imperfection) and believing this Gospel to be the certain word of God; Then next, to entertain the Christ that is offered in this Gospel to be ours; with all the benefits that accompany, and to all the blessed ends to which he is revealed: Thus the water of life is freely tendered to all that are *athirst*, and there is no more required but *come and drink*.

Then there is two things imply'd that are the immediate products of this saving faith, and inseparable from it; *i. e.* *trusting* on him as the Redeemer, and *obeying* him as a Lord. To rest upon him as a Redeemer, Ro. 15. 12. And here, as far as the soul feels entertainment and encouragement by Christ, overcoming his doubts that Christ will reject him, &c. so far he hath quietness of soul in Christ, and will trust his soul upon Christ. And then, the *obeying* of him in order to our full recovery, (as a Patient must obey his Physitian) in using his remedies, and means he prescribes for killing our sins, restoring our souls to Gods love, and being with him to eternity.

The nature of faith is to receive Christ; the sincerity of it lies in the suitableness of the act to the object; that we receive him as he is: Now, in Christ there is something essential to this act; that he be a Saviour, and our Saviour, &c. and there is something makes unto the well-being and fuller attaining of the end: The first are the objects of faith itself, as 'tis of absolute necessity to salvation; The second sort are the objects of faith as it is strong, and makes to the well-being of a Christian. All that is essential to Christ, as a Saviour, and Redeemer, is to be believed by him that will approve himself a true believer. And thus to receive Christ as the eternal Son of God, made man, the Redeemer of the world, ruling us upon the right of redemption, justifying us before God, bringing us to God and interceding for us: And thus Christ must be received according to his offices, and as those uses for which he is given to the soul do import and imply.

For the application of this point;

First, let us begin with those that our business at present doth not mainly lie on. Must men *walk in Christ as they have received him*? What shall we say to those that *have not*, will not receive him! Stop us at the door, that we can't bring in the
Doctrine

Doctrine of Christ; that will not receive the principles of Christ: How can we bring them, and build them up, that will not suffer the Foundation to be laid, the seed to be received? Hast thou not received Christ? Then thou hast refused Christ, been a despiser of the Gospel of Christ, which will prove thy great condemnation. What is it for thee to hear the Name, and not to have the Spirit of Christ? Do not go upon conjectures; it's one thing to number thy self with those that are Christians, as to outward appearance, and another thing to open thy heart, and deliver up thy self to Christs Government, and as a lost sinner to receive him to those ends a Saviour must be received. And remember, this was no small Work, Gods sending Christ into the World; no small thing to fetch thee from Hell and Satan, to wash guilty souls from all their sins, and to bring them to everlasting glory. If these great things be rightly understood and believed by thee, if Christ be understood well as Christ, it must be done with a wakened, humbled, self-resigning heart, making the greatest matter in the World of these things: Hath thy soul been seriously taken up about thy own recovery? And hast thou received Christ as a man that was ready to be damned? as one that had a load on his soul heavier than all the Mountains of Earth, to ease and deliver him? As one that was under the frowns of God, in a state of enmity, receives reconciliation? Hast thou received Christ, as if thou hadst received Heaven in him? Believe it, these are great transactions, and will affect thy heart; and it is not a
sleepy

sleepy or jesting matter thus to receive Christ. Consider what it is to receive Christ,

1. If you have received Christ, you have received the great *Reconciler*, that binds up the broken-hearted, quiets those that tremble under the threatnings of God, for fear he should forsake and cast them off for ever.

2. If thou hast received Christ, thou hast received a perfect *enmity* to *all sin*, that will never let thee *rest* in sin, but be perswading thee from it, and conflicting in thee against sin in thy soul: If thou hast received Christ, thou hast not received a friend for sin, that will plead for, or give thee leave to commit sin; but one, that though he bear with thee in thy weakness, yet abominates thy sin. If thou hast received a Lord and Master to rule, to be consented and subjected to him, and to be ruled by none but in subordination to him, who will break those in pieces that refuse his Government, *Obedience*, and not *verbal Profession*, is the thing he requires. Hast thou entertained Christ to be the Master of thy words, thoughts and deeds, whose Government thou livest under, more than under any in the world?

3dly, If you have received Christ, you have then received the beginning of felicity and full contentment to your souls; having found none in your sins, you have it discovered to you where it is; therefore with gladness you go on; and so far as
you

you have hopes of attaining it, so far you have great contentment, &c.

4thly, In a word, if you have received Christ, you have fallen out with sin; subjected pleasures, profits and honors to him; and you have received his Spirit, and this Spirit hath made you new, and maintaines a Warr within you against the flesh, &c.

If this be not thy case, Oh that thou knewest what a case thou art in! For then

1. What the better art thou for all his blood shed as yet, if thou wert this day to dye? What would Christs blood do to the cleansing and saving of thy soul?

2. How canst thou look thy sins in the face, and think on what thou hast done and art? How canst thou look inward into thy defiled heart, and not tremble, when thou hast no more shelter from the wrath of God?

3dly, How canst thou looke God in the face, who is a hater of sin? How canst thou read his Attributes, think on his Threatnings, &c.

4. How canst thou think to have any duty accepted, any prayer heard, or rewarded? &c.

5. How

5. How canst thou think on the day of Judgment, on the time when thou must receive thy final sentence, if thou hast not received Christ? Oh what a thing is a Christless heart! &c.

Q. What shall I do that I may receive Christ?

A. 1. Till Christ be thine, and hath brought peace from Heaven to thy soul, let no peace be there to keep him out: I do not say, overwhelm thy self with sorrow; but let sorrow dwell there, and let holy cares and solicitousness about thy spiritual state be there till Christ come and quiet and reconcile thee to God,

2. Read and believe the Gospel, see there what Christ is, and thy necessity of him: *Believing* will open the door to *entertaining* him; *assent* will procure thy *consent*.

3. Keep up no Idol in thy heart against him. Turn out that that keeps out Christ. How dear soever it seems now, at last thou wilt see it more necessary to detect than keep it.

I come now to exhort all poor weak Christians, that they would make after confirmation, and grow to a greater measure in Grace, as they have received Christ. It is not enough to be *con-*
ceived that you have been converted; and it will not be enough to the assurance of your conversion,

sion, or safety of your souls; that you think you are converted and sit down there: He that is content with the opinion he hath Grace, therefore desires to have no more, because the promise of salvation is made to the *Truth of Grace*, it's a sign he never had Grace; *Strength in Grace* is your own felicity, 'tis part of your happiness: Your eternal happiness will partly consist in your *personal perfection*; and without personal perfection, all heavenly glory will not be a perfect felicity. If you have fixed your Anchor in God's Promises, this engages you to look up, make after, and proceed, &c.

[Take these motives.

1. Consider, there is the same reason to move thee to grow and proceed, as there was to move thee to thy first believing. Why did you become Christians, but because of the necessity of the riches and excellencies of Christ, and that there was better things in Christ, than in the World? And are they not so still? Is the case changed? If Christianity was reasonable then, it is reasonable now; if it was necessary to begin, it is necessary to hold on, and proceed in your Race, till you have obtained the Crown.

2. Your receiving Christ essentially, contains
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in it an obligation to proceed and go further; actually to trust and obey him, whom you have taken for your Lord and Saviour; from the very offices and relations of Christ received.

If I be a Father, where is my fear? If I be a Master, where is my Honour? If I be a Saviour, where is your Confidence in me, submission to my saving-Work, Obedience to my healing-Precepts? If I be your Lord and Master, why do not you learn of me as your Master, &c.

Your first Covenant engages you to proceed in fulfilling the things promised in your Covenant, &c. Better not to have promised to be his people, than to promise and break this promise. The very *Mercies* also you received from him, pardoning your former sin, entertainment in his Church, and all the blessing there found, are as so many obligations to proceed.

3. Ever since we came home to Christ, we have had an addition of Reasons, besides the first Reason we had to believe: Every day brings in new, &c. Certainly if a little were desirable, more were more desirable: If the people that stood a far off, and never tried what Christ and Grace is, were bid to *come in*, those that have tried and tasted, are bound to proceed much more: You have the Spirit of God, experiences of his love, tasted the bitterness of sin, have had some trial of the truth of such things of which we speak, when o-
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thers have eyes, and *see not*, &c. and will you turn back that have tasted? &c.

4. Consider how much hath been lost up: on many a soul for want of care to take rooting, and to proceed? How much labour of the Ministry, mercies of God, pains and care of their own? I speak of those that have seemed sincere, not indeed so; that have many times comforted the hearts of their Ministers and Friends, and have had some kind of comfort to themselves in that; tast they have had of the good word of God. How many times hath the Preacher been gladdened to see such a one come to him, seemingly with a broken heart, seeming to set themselves in the way of life! yet the flesh prevailed for want of confirmation. How many years have some spent in duty, in hearing, prayer, gracious society, profession of Religion! yet afterwards the world hath drown'd all. What cause have you to see you lose not the thing you have wrought?

5. Consider how much of the works of your own salvation when you are converted, is yet undone. Though you are sure your conversion is true, how many temptations to resist, enemies to conquer, duties to perform, and Heaven to be taken upon all those terms,

as is the tenor of your Christianity! therefore you had need to stand fast, and having done all, to stand; you had need not onely to believe, but to wait and be patient in believing, and to proceed in the way you have chosen.

6. The want of strength and building up, makes the lives of many full of lamentable languishing weaknesses, scandals unto others, pain, calamity and trouble to themselves. How long in healing? And how much smart and pain, while the fruit of their own folly is cured? How little, and how frequently do temptations prevail? And hence as in a wilderness, they are going one step forward, another backward, no evident keeping in God, and all through the fruit of their own languishing weakness; the fruits of the sins of Professors have been such, that it should make you do all you can possible to escape the troubles at home, and reproaches abroad.

7 A life of spiritual weakness, is usually a burden unto him that hath it; it doth not onely occasion his falling into sinne, and so renews the wounds of his soule, but is a constant burden to him; not that any measure of Grace is troublesome, but

but that which consists with so great a measure of remaining corruption, this is the burden: sickness is burdensome though there be life. Methinks you should not then be reconciled to your fears: you should methinks see so great difference between the sick and well, that for your own peace sake you should seek after confirmation: Every duty they do is their pain, which is anothers pleasure: prayer, &c. their burden: sometimes tired, wearied, dull, &c. presently overwhelmed with temptation: every duty is a grievance to them through the weakness of their grace and their corruption.

8. Christians that are weak and not confirmed, lose abundance of the fruit of Gods Ordinances that are improved by others: how many a truth that tastes exceeding sweet to others, hath no great relish to them, nor growth by it! A healthful man hath more relish in ordinary fare then a sick person in varieties: the full stomach loaths the Honey-comb.

9. The weak and unconfirmed christian is unprofitable comparatively unto others; not that the Church would with the weakest member out, but comparatively unconfirmed christians are very unprofitable unto others, like little children in the family that must be looked to, make work for a great many more about them. What doth a sick person? but the work of others is to feed, support, and be a help to him. The Church of God hath need of strong christians that can pray in faith, fervency for others, and you cant scarcely pray for your selves. Consider when the Church needs a great deal of help, will you sit down with low attainments & little things, when so many hundreds about you need so great assistance?

10. Weak persons are many times the troublers and very dangers of the Church; many calamities have been occasioned by them. The sins of Professors have occasioned the displeasure of God on the Church: their errors hindred truth and made divisions. When Christians have not so much strength as to know truth from errour, that hearkens to every one that speaks with likeness: What have these Christians done in the Church? What mercies have been driven away so far, that I think the Church of God, since the Apostles dayes till now, hath suffered more by the sins of Professors, then the malice of their enemies. And how canst thou expect God will save thy soul, when thou hast set the Church on fire, and been so great hindrance to others, that many should perish occasionally by thy example? &c. The greatest sufferings of the Church have come from the miscarriages of the Church.

11. Such have been the great dishonourers of Christ; and the graces of ancient Christians, the glory of their profession: their charity, self-denial, heavenly-mindedness, patience, &c. preached the Gospel to the world more effectually then ever their words could do. God expects your lives should be a considerable meanes for the conversion of wicked men: the same God that hath commanded Ministers to teach others by their doctrine, hath commanded you should live for the conversion of the world; that your zeal, humility, patience, charity, self-denial, should win souls to God. And if it be a sin to give over preaching when we may, surely so to give over living, &c.

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If woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel, then woe unto you if by your lives you preach not the Gospel. How many sinners have you about you, and how do you wrong and rob the ungodly of that Ordinance God hath appointed for their conversion and salvation? You are the persons that take the bread out of their mouths, the means that should save them out of their hands, while you deny them one of the commanded means of salvation, i.e. the eminent example of your lives: And if it be so great a sin to stop Preachers mouths, how great a sin to neglect this Ordinance? Nay, are not you a dishonour to the Church? Is it not because of Professors ill lives, that the prophane deride Religion, while they see not that glory in it that should overpower an unbelieving and denying soul, and should indeed effectually manifest its excellency? Are these the Professors, that are proud, stubborn, passionate, censorious, self-conceited, contemptuous, and envious as any others? I know the world is apt enough to slander, and the Servants of God bear a world of unjust reproaches: but oh that there were not this occasion, &c.

12. Those that are not confirmed and established in grace, the Devil, when he hath prevailed by a temptation on themselves, can easily make them his Instruments to draw and tempt others from their duty, to discourage them in their Religion, and to do that mischief in the world he hath done, by temptation on their own soul. 'Tis ordinary for Satan to make use of lapsed, distempered Christians to be the instruments of his temptations to those that are better, &c. An honest Christian

will not so easily hearken to a drunkard, swearer, as to a professo he had good thoughts of, *Gal. 2. 13.*

13. For want of strength and establishment in grace, poor weak christians are a very great encouragement to the carnal hopes of wicked men. I think scarce any thing in the world hinders our preaching more then this; when the wicked see those that make the greatest profession no better then themselves, and in somethings worse, this hardens him against all the convictions that can be brought against him: tell him he cannot be saved without conversion, he looks upon professors, sees them contentious, worldly, peevish, passionate, &c. sees some sin or other, this makes him think he is as well as they: must there be so much ado to bring men to this state? is this the difference? &c.

14. Methinks it should be some trouble to an honest heart, that yet we must be so like to the children of the wicked one: and the weakest christians are the likest to the wicked: I do not mean weakness in gifts, or knowledge, &c. but a weakness in practical saving knowledge, love of God, self-denial, mortification, heavenly-mindedness, &c. they that are in these the weakest christians, are the next and likest to the wicked: And doth not this grieve thee, that though thou art not a child of the Devil, thou art so like one? We should not be conformed to the world, nor like to the in any thing, no not in outward vanities: but to imitate the fashion of the world as to inward corruption, to go in their garb when a palpable vanity, to have so much of their pride, peevishness, malice,

lice, worldliness, oh look upon thy heart with humiliation.

15. Consider what a dangerous and lamentable standing those have that be not established, &c. you stand, but it is as unrooted plants or trees that stand shaking in the wind: beholders are alwayes looking when they fall: you stand, but it is as a sick man, wavering, reeling, like *Lots wife*, looking back, and alwayes upon every occasion ready to repent: You have been Believers; little things perplex and trouble you; little tribulations and afflictions discompose and disturb you; little temptations make you question the Scripture, the Providence of God, his love and care of his people, and the great foundations of Religion: Foundations seem to shake, because you are shaking and tottering, &c. And what is like to become of such a soul? If thou stand shaking under small temptations for want of confirmation, what wilt thou do when a Papist, or Quaker, &c. shall so speak concerning Religion, which thou art not able to answer? and so the surest foundation seems nothing when thou hast so weak hold: our greatest afflictions, next to the misery of the ungodly, is to think of our weak ones, what will become of them: and verily we do expect a considerable part of our congregation should be carried away: those that are *Christians and know not why*, yet have not humility enough to make use of others, and to keep close to those that should assist them. Remember when you see such times, when seducers are able to say the worst, shall make the strongest assaults on the weak ones, how many will be like to fall?

Again, sickness, death, dying times will come, when you shall find a little grace will not easily do your work; and though you perish not, yet you may faint, and to your sorrow finde the want of confirmation. You cannot but know how the strongest are put to it in trying houres, or at death. Will slack and unsettled hopes of another life, such distempered hearts fight and encounter with such tryals? Never think of dying comfortably, if you follow not after confirming grace.

16. It should humble you the more, that you have been so long, so many years in the School of Christ, and love God, &c. no better: Should not you in this Apprenticeship have learned better your Religion, and been Teachers of others, when perhaps, if in the principles you are assaulted, you will show your weakness as soon as any? May not Christ say, *Have I been so long time with you, and yet have you known, lov'd, &c. no better?* reached no higher, attained no further? weaklings still? Nay consider in this time what advantage have you had for growth? A tree planted on a barren wilderness may not grow so much as in a fruitful place: but you have had the plenty and power of the Ordinances of God, the choicest of the meanes and helps of salvation.

17. Consider, the nature of true grace tends to this: will you cross the nature of it? shall we be such weaklings in Religion, which crosse so the nature of grace? for grace, the more its exercised, the more it *increases*.

18. Heaven it self is perfection, and the work of a Christian is to press towards heaven, and therefore 'tis to press towards perfection. You should make towards the end in a manner and way that is futable to the end. Persons that enjoy so much already, and hope for so much greater, should not put off God with such little things.

19. Little grace shall have but little glory. You know not how great a difference there is between the least and highest in the Kingdome of God. Nay 'tis not only for a Christian to desire to be glorified, but to enjoy the highest degree in glory: to serve God with the best, and improve his Talent to the utmost, that his heavenly reward may be according. A Christian should not slight it when 'tis tendred to him and in his eye.

Quest. But how shall I know I have attained this confirming grace?

A. These signs following shew a Christian confirmed and strong in grace, which I will name, that you may know what to aim at, and what to desire. There is not so great a difference between a King and a Beggar, between the greatest health and sickliest man, as between a strong useful Christian, and a poor languishing soul, &c.

1. A confirmed Christian is one *that can resist many subtil and strong temptations*, not only a single temptation, but when Satan assaults on every side, with errors on both extreames, with importunities of several parties, with temptations of prosperity offered, of adversity felt or feared; strong

temptations that seem to lay a necessity of yielding on a weakling, that makes him say, I must do it to save my liberty, family, life, &c. A strong christian can say, there is no necessity: he can make light of those temptations that seem to be a necessity to other persons: he can confute a subtil Sophister, and deal with a cunning Adversary: Satan cannot so easily go beyond and out-wit him.

2. He can do great, excellent and useful work, is serviceable to God if he have opportunity in business of greatest consequence: he doth not serve God only in some little and inconsiderable things, but in his place sets himself to the work of God, doth the great work of his Majesty faithfully: The service of God to him is more easie and delightful: as to go ten miles is more easie to the healthful, then one to a sickly person: he can go through Gods service with pleasure, ease and delight, without tiring, fainting, sitting down, or giving over.

3. He can digest the hard Truths and Providences of God, that are ready to puzzle, perplex, and over-set the stomach of a weak christian: He hath laid his foundation, to which he reduces all things of difficulty, and by the help of those great truths he hath received, he can easily see through the difficulties of all that are yet before him. He can tell how to reconcile those things in Scripture that seem

seem contradictions: where he meets with a difficulty, he can easily discern the cause is in himself, and that there is an undoubted way of reconciling them, though he hath not attained to it. He can easily quiet his soul under the most difficult providences, and interpret them so as is consistent with the truths of God, which must expound them: he reconciles providence with providence, & providence with Scripture: whereas a weak christian is ready to say, *A hard saying, who can bear this and that?* And 'tis the difficulty of these kinds of Truths that make so many turn their Religion, because not able to digest the hardest Truths of God. Cross providences makes them question Gods love, &c.

4. He is one that can exercise various graces, without setting one against another, destroying or contradicting one another. He can do many works, believe many truths, perform many duties at once. He can rejoyce and sorrow at once, and make his sorrow a help to his joy, and his joy a help to his sorrow, and so exercise both in that nature as will not directly hinder or weaken one another. He can tell how in such a time as we are in to rejoyce, yet to be humble: to be cast down at Gods feet in the sense of the sins we have committed, and of Gods displeasure, &c. yet to rejoyce in the mercies we have, and do expect to possess. He doth not look all upon sin, all upon affliction, or all upon mercy: but can
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eye every thing, and give every thing its part : can exercise graces methodically, give truths and providences their proper place in his meditations and affections : and this makes his life orderly, beautiful, regular and useful : whereas a weak christian, let him set himself against one temptation, he is taken in another : if he humble himself in soul, he can do nothing but humble, weep, grieve, fear, and be ready to cast away all comfort, all sence of the love of God : if he set himself to the consideration of the grace of Christ, he is apt to forget Humiliation, and to be puffed up with spiritual pride, &c. Thus he hath not skill, strength and ability to carry on all the whole work of grace together.

5. A strong christian sinks not under those burdens that would press down and overwhelm a weak christian : he can bear heavy burdens, and more easily away with them, making it a recreation to bear some things that another would sink under and cannot bear. 'Tis thy weakness that makes thee make such a stir, when God layes on thee personal, family, publick afflictions, that makes thee shrink under them : strength of grace would enable thee to see God and glory in the midst of them, and to say, *all shall work for my good* : it would enable thee to get advantage, and be bettered by them. Hadst thou strength enough to improve them, thou wouldst take comfort from them, and support thy self under them : but when thou hast not strength enough to understand Gods meaning, to see the duty then called for, to improve all for God, to do that service to God thou shouldst do
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in such a condition, no wonder if thou have not grace to support and comfort thee in that condition. Whereas the confirmed christian by strong faith, love and patience can carry great burdens, &c.

6. *Is helpful to many, and troublesome unto few.* They are the useful persons in the family and place where they live: it is they can counsel others in their doubts, help them in their straits; that can bear up the weak when ready to sink, that can hold others by the arm when not able to go upright; that tend Gods little Ones: and if it were not for these, what would Gods little Ones do? They are so furnished with patience, which God hath given them for the use of the weak ones in his family, and though they are troublesome, or do that which might be a disturbance to them, they will not thrust them out; it is they that comfort the feeble, support, provide for, strengthen, and confirm the rest; and were it not for these, what back-sliding hearts should we have? &c. And they are comparatively troublesome to few, (though, while corruption cleaves to them, they shall sometimes:) It is not they that are censuring their brethren, that are stirring up division, and make all that feud that is in the Church: if they might be hearkned unto and regarded, there would be quietness and composure (for if ever there be peace, it will be by the strong ones:) But weak ones in grace are the burdens and troublers of the family: you may know they are the weak ones in Gods house, in that they are those that are alwayes crying, complaining, making fire-work in the family, back-biting, censuring their brethren, quarrelling

quarrelling with one or other, &c. these peevish, troublesome souls are the weak ones, &c.

7. The strongest in grace are the best able to stand, work, and suffer alone. Though in duty they should not be alone when they can have society, and though the rest are most humble, therefore are sensible they have need of others, and will not throw away any of their helps, yet if all forsake them, they will stand to it still: they go not to heaven merely for company sake: they be not christians merely because such and such are christians: If all the world forsake Christ, they will stick to him, unless Christ leave them to their own weakness. But the weak Christian hath a great deal more need of comfort and support, and lives a more dependent life: they cannot stand, work, suffer alone: if their Minister fall, they fall: if their Relations change, they change; if there be not some-body at hand to confute an Adversary, they yield: if there be not some-body to keep life and warmth, they grow cold in every duty: in affliction they can step on no longer then led by the hand, &c. have christians to support, and to quiet, and moderate their passions, and to teach them the doctrine of patience: they can hold up no longer then they are refreshed with cordials: What would become of you, should God let you stand by your selves? &c.

8. The strong christian is one that can best live without creatures upon God alone (and a weak christian is one that hath most need of the creature,

ture, and can least live upon God alone) under the censures of the godly, frowns of the wicked, without riches, honours, pleasures; can have quietness and contentment in God, whether he have any thing or nothing, whereever he is, &c. The more necessity thou art in of having something besides God for thy consolation, the more weak thou art: there must be comfortable provision in the family, health, ease, liberty; there must be supply: I know not how to be poor, disgraced, &c. this impatient soul is the feeble soul: Impatience is nothing but the fruit of weakness. The strong christian can live upon God alone: therefore if men make as if they were undone, if lost in their estates, 'tis a certain sign of a lamentable weakness of a sick soul.

9. That is the best and strongest christian, and most confirmed in grace, who is most employed and abides in the love of God, in love to God: That hath the fear of God, but goes beyond fear, and loves most, and abides most in the love of God: That makes it his great business to feed upon and study the love of God to him, and to return love to him again. The more Gods love is on thy heart, and the more thou livest in the fruit of that love, the stronger christian. But he that lives most by a kind of constraining fear, though he may be sincere, he is but weak: where there is nothing but fear and no love, there is no sincerity; but where there is some little measure of love, fear is such a tyrant that it will many times cloud it, so that almost all his life seemes to be moved
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and managed by fear : and in this there is much lothness and unwillingness, and they had rather do otherwise then they do : according to the measure of love is the strength of grace.

10. He is the strongest christian that hath most pure and most universal love to others, that can love all men, even an enemy, with true unteigned love, even with such love as belongs to a christian : that can love every christian, and not a party only, with the pure and fervent love which belongs to Believers : that can love every child of God, and not those only that are of his opinion, or have done him good, but all because they are children of God, with a sincere and special hearty love. That is the weak christian that picks and chooses, that is staggering when he comes to loving an enemy : that takes in those that agree with him in judgement, and makes those almost only the object of his love ; that would confine his affections to some narrow society, some little sect, party, or parcel of Believers, and cannot love christians as christians : And hence it is, division is the effect of enmity, or of weakness in grace, for want of the universality of love. I would make no question to prognostick the healing of all divisions within this Nation, could I but advance all that are concerned in it to the right temper of christian love. 'Tis the weak children in Christs family that falls out, when we have not enough love to reach to all, and to love a christian as a christian, &c.

Quest. What must be done by those that are converted to keep them where they are ; to help them unto growth,

to make them better, to further their confirmation, to secure their Salvation, that they may after all attain the Crown?

Ans. I shall leave with you twenty Directions; and as many as there are, there are not more then you must practice; and take them as if they were the last Directions I should give you; and take them as practicals, not as notionals, that you must live upon as long as you live.

1. See that the foundation be soundly laid in your head and heart in matters of your Religion. In your head, *i. e.* that you well understand what Religion is, what the Christian Religion is: what God is: what it is for God to be yours, in his Attributes and Relations unto you: what he is and will be unto you: what you are and must be unto him: what sin is, how odious, wherein its evil consists: what is sin, and what not: what sin hath done in the world, and what state it hath brought transgressors into: what Christ is, what he hath done for mans recovery and redemption: what he hath wrought, gives and offers to the world: The end and design of God in the work of mans redemption: The tender of the Gospel-Covenant of grace, freeness, largeness, and excellency of the grace of this Covenant: The end of our Religion: the everlasting glory that is revealed in the Gospel, what it is, how sure, and how great. When you understand these things, get a sound and radical belief concerning the Truths of the holy Scripture revealing all these things: And think it not enough that the Scripture is true, or that you
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are resolved so to believe, but get the best grounds for your belief: be well established on those grounds: Read the Scripture much, till you are acquainted with, and relish the matter and language, and feel the power, and till all be delightful to your souls in reading. And be not ashamed to understand the Fundamentals: look to your Catechisines: The fundamentals of Religion you must understand and receive. And when you have got them into your head, be sure you get them into your heart, and never think any truth received as it ought, till it hath done some special work on your heart; till you believe that God is Almighty, Just, Holy, &c. and all the Attributes of God have made their holy impression on your heart: that the sanctifying knowledge of God hath warmed your affections, captivated your souls, that God be inthron'd in your hearts by the belief and knowledge of your minds: Know your selves so as to be humble: know *Christ* so as he may be sweet unto you, and exalted by you: set up *Christ* in your souls nearest to your hearts: know sin so as to hate it, &c. 'Tis the entertainment of the good things of the Gospel by the will that is the principal part of your Religion. 'Tis a matter of lamentable consequence in all your lives, when there is not a sound work at the heart: how little life will there be from any truth in reading or hearing? The Fundamentals of Religion must be so received, as not only to have an old heart mended, but a new heart made. Thus understand, believe, and give up thy heart to that thou believest and understandest.

2. Know and remember the work of your Salvation, must be as long as your lives; and that you have never done, till you have done living. I give this direction because I find something in Christianity, the remains of Carnality is apt to hinder; &c. and some professors, when converted, they are reconciled to God, and safe, &c. but there's a great deal to be done after, &c.

3. Understand well wherein it is your confirmation, stability, rootedness, and growth in Religion doth consist. The chief part of your growth in Grace is not to know more things then you knew before: but to grow in the knowledge, believe, entertainment, and improvement of the same truths, that at first you did receive: (not that you may not or should not know more, for the clear knowledge of the fundamentals, guides you unavoidably to the sight of many other truths, which a darker knowledge of those fundamentals will not discover to you.) 'Tis not additional to your former knowledge, but the clearer knowing, sonnder believing, heartier entertaining and improving of the truths you knew at first; as the health of a man consists not in having every day variety of food, but in the partaking and digestion of the same food, that's fittest for him: get but a more perfect conviction, or concoction of what you knew before, and this is your growth. You may grow in the knowledge of Gods attributes by knowing them more clearly, orderly, distinctly, satisfactorily and beleevingly then before. There is a world of difference in the manner of knowledge, between a dark and clear knowing things: grow in greater love to them,

and greater skill in entertainment, improvement, and practise of them.

4. Grow downward in humility, and inward in the knowledge of your selves : and above all, maintain a constant abhorrence and jealousy of the sin of pride : grow in humility, and fly from man ; keep a constant apprehension of your unworthiness and weakness, of the odiousness and danger of sin of spiritual pride : (we called, because exercised about spiritual things) of being puffed up with pride of any thing in your selves, of being too confident in your selves : be low in your own, and expect not, nor desire others good thoughts of you, Humility lyes not in humility of opinion speech, garbe, or carriage : but in opposition to high thoughts of our owne parts, gifts, godliness, when we think of these above their worth : still remember *Psal.* 25. *Pro.* 26. 19. *Isai.* 57. 15. *Ioh.* 22. 25. as ever you would grow in grace and be confirmed Christians, keep a low esteem of your selves, be mean in your own eyes, be content to be mean in others, and harken not to secret flatterers that would puff you up. Take heed of any thing that would puff you up, &c.

5. You must understand that you are Disciples in Christs school, where Ministers are his teachers and guides : the Ordinances his means for his peoples good, and the Scripture, the Book you must learn : therefore keep in this order : keep under these guides, commit your souls to those that are faithful, and fit for souls to be intrusted with : and when you have done with humble submissiveness to their teaching, keep in this school under those officers

Officers in their Discipline, and dwell in the Catho-
like Church and Communion of Saints, and un-
derstand the duty of Pastors and people, *Heb. 13.*
17, 18. 1 Thes. 5. 12 obey them that have the rule o-
ver you. If God had seen the poor Christians in-
sufficient to support themselves, he would never have
made it the duty of all to be marshalled and ranked
in several schools, ranks, orders, and all to walk
in this order to Heaven. If you withdraw from un-
der Christs officers and ordinance, you are in dan-
ger of being snatcht up as straglers.

Q. What shall we do, ? who shall we take for
our guides, if God take them away ? &c.

A. Tis not the denial of publike liberty that
loses that relation between a Pastor and his Flock,
nor any word from man should cause a poor soul
to trust it selfe for guidance of Salvation to one
that is not able : a mans soul is not to be hazarded
upon damnation, by being deprived of the officers
and ordinances of Christ, and cast upon the con-
duct of a blind guid, meerly for the pleasuring of a
meer man.

6. Be sure you understand the nature of Church
union, and necessity of maintaining it, and ab-
horre all ways that are truly Schismatical, that
would rent and divide the Church of Christ. As
you must not under pretence of avoiding schisme,
cast your soul upon apparent hazard of damna-
tion, so you must maintain the necessity of Church
union and Communion : when Christs members
walk in Communion with Christs members, sup-
posing that which is singular to the generality of
judicious men. Take heed of any thing that would

withdraw you from the Communion of the generality of those that are sound in the faith. Take heed of withdrawing from the main body of beleevers. Christ is the head of his Church; he will never condemn his Church; walk in those substantials Christs Church hath walked in. Divisions among Christians is a sin God hath described as odious, and tending to the ruine of Christians. Be very suspitions of any that would draw you from the main body of Beleevers, and keep Communion with the universal Church of Christ, with the generality of the Godly in love and affection, &c.

7 Be sure your own hearts and ways be the matter of your daily study; and when hypocrites have their work abroad, let yours be much at home; while they make it their business to censure this and that man, let the main of your business be in dressing the inward of your own hearts, in keeping all right between God and you. Observe your hearts *inclinations*. If any inordinate inclination after any thing, set a special guard: mark which way your *thoughts* go, that you may know your *inclinations* by your *thoughts*. In an especial manner, preserve *tenderness* of *Conscience*, fear of *sin*, loathfulness to displease God; let *Truth* have the mastery, maintain such a conscience that dares not *Sin* to save your lives. Be sure you sin not willfully. obey the light.

8 Be sure to keep up continually a lively apprehension of the state and place of your everlasting happiness, to live by faith upon the unseen world. Know where your happiness lyes, and what it is, that you grow not to Carnall apprehensions of your happiness. Live upon Heaven, and let that be
it

it that shall animate your faith to duty: and all that you may still be weary of vexations, and sensible of the vanities here below: Let your conversation be above. Be confirmed in your apprehensions of the certainty and excellency of eternal blessedness; grow more in Heavenly mindedness and in satisfaction of soul, in the hopes you have of these things.

9 Understand the nature, method, and power of temptations how to resist them, and live in watchfulness. Be not a stranger to Satan and his methods of tempting, what you have to watch against and oppose, where you must be armed. Understand the nature of *Christian watchfulness*; keep up a constant resolution and courage in resisting, especially the temptations you carry about with you, of your calling, constitution, company, and of the times; set them down, remember them, keep a special observation of them all: and say, this and this it is I am in danger of; and 'tis my *integrity* and *Salvation* that's in danger, and here place a special guard, and make it your business to resist. The principal cause of Christians negligence in this, is the security of their consciences, and love of their sins: did you know your danger, you would better look after your safety.

2 Cor. 2 II.

10. Especially understand how much the *flesh* and carnal *selfe* is an enemy to God and your souls: and how much you are engaged by the Christian Covenant to live in a *warfare* against your selves, and against your flesh. You must not think the life of self-pleasing is consistent with Religion: un-

derstand how you are bound to take the flesh for your enemy, to watch against it, and to live in a continual combat with it. *Col. 3. 5.* The flesh is your chiefest enemy: the very senses themselves are all grown inordinate, and the work of faith is very much seen in its exercise this way; If you get an opinion that you may eat, and drink, and cloath, &c. and do all things to gratifie your selves, &c. then no wonder if you find but little encrease in spirituals whil you grow so carnal. Understand & practise the duty of selfe-denial *selfe is the very heart of sin*: read it not under pretence of liberty in Religion.

11. Give not way to a formal, heartless, *sleeping Religiousness, Customaryness*, without the life: but keep your souls in a continual seriousness and awakenedness about God, immortality, and your great concernments. If duty be dead, take heed lest that incline you to a deadness in another, and so grow to a customary deadness. Take heed of spiritual slothfulness, that makes you keep your hands in your bosom, when you should be doing for your soule: stir up to, and in duty, when you have but little time for life eternal: do not pray as if you prayed not, or hear as though you heard not: but when upon duty, doing Gods service, do it with all the seriousness and rigor you can. To grow lazie and negligent is the declining way: use such considerations as may stir you up. *Rom. 13. 11. Tim. 2. 14.*

12. Remember always the worth of time, and greatness of your work, and therefore so value time, as not negligently or slothfully to lose a moment: it will quickly be gone, and when you
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are at the last you will better know its worth: harken to no temptation that will draw you to any trifling, abusing, wasting of your precious time; if thou hast no argument against thy sports, trifling pleasures, &c. but this, It loses my time, take it for a greater argument then if it lose thee thy money, friends, or any thing in the world: especially value the preciouslest of your time, your youth, your morning hours, especially the Lords d. y; lose not any part of it, but improve it with your selves and families: lose not a moment of the Lords day, nor any of thy precious time thou canst spare & redeem: if thou hast lost any, be humble for it, and be careful to redeem the rest: look back, do you approve of the time that is past? could you not have spent it better? remember what you have lost, let that quicken you; look before you, remember what is to be done, and do that first which must be done, and then leave trifles to that time you have to spare: it is ignorance & idleness, & not want of work that makes any think they have time to spare. Eph. 5. 16 Col. 4. 5.

13. Make a careful choice of your company; you cannot travel well to Heaven alone, especially when you may have company, thrust not your selves into every company Eph. 5. 7. converse as much as you can with those that will help you, that are warm when you are cold, knowing when you are ignorant, believing when you are doubtful, &c. especially for your constant companions, live with those that will be a frequent help to you: Masters chuse the best servants that fear God: servants, chuse to live with those that will help you in the fear of God: for Husbands and Wives make choice

of those that will intend upon Religion; take heed of being unequally yoked, and of thinking to get well to Heaven, while you presume to unite your selves with those that with great advantage will hinder, not help your Salvation.

14. Keep a constant guard upon the tongue, especially take heed of those common sins that disgrace hath not driven out of the world, but have got some kind of credit amongst some professors: namely idle talk that wastes precious time, makes us unfruitful to one another, backbiting especially, can they put but a Religious pretence upon it, or if they backbite those that differ in opinion. Remember that terrible passage *Pro. 18. 21. Ia. 1. 26. & 35. 6. Psal. 39. & 35. 28.* avoyd idle talk, backbiting, &c. watch over your tongues: and if any are by nature addicted to a laxity of tongue and multitude of words, there lies a double obligation on you in point of danger and necessity, above all others to keep a careful watch over your tongue, you should rather speak fewer words then others: and if you find your selves inclined to speak against any behind his back, reprehend your selves and avoid it.

15. Learn the holy skill of improving every condition that God shall cast you into; learn how to live to God in every condition: if you have skill and heart, there is advantage to be got by all; that prosperity may strengthen you in God, encourage you in his service, that adversity may wean you from the world, help you to repentance, raise you to God, and give you more then it took away. Know the danger and duty of every condition, study

dy them before they come upon you, that they do not surprize you: learn to know whats the danger, duty, and particular temptation of every condition, and in that condition you are most likely to expect a fall into: prepare for affliction as the common lott of the Saints, take it as no strange thing when it overtakes you: know how to abound and how to want. A great deal of a Christians safety and comfort lies on this, to study the temptation and duty of every condition before it come, that so you may have your remedy at hand, and fall to your work, and commit your selves to God.

16. Be as conscionable and strict in the dutys of your relations, and dealings with men, proportionably as in the dutys of holiness more directly to be performed to God; make as much conscience, care, study, diligence, about being just, that you wrong no man in buying or selling, as you do in dutys of holiness, hearing, praying, receiving. In your trading make conscience of justice and faithfulness as well as in the worship of God, and in your own personal behaviour; in your calling be diligent, not slothful in business, &c. And so in the dutys of your relations: Oh that Parents knew what a charge lies on them concerning the souls of their Children, &c. so Masters, look to your servants, and be as conscionable in doing your duty for their souls good, and being faithful to them, and compassionate over them, as in your duty to God: keep up family dutys with life, seriousness, diligence and vigor: the life of Religion in the world must be kept up very much in families.

17. Make it your study and care to do all the
good

good you can in the world, let doing good be the principal part of your business, think that the safest and happiest life in which you can do greatest good: suffer not opportunities to slip out of your hands; take them where you have them, and seek where you may have them; look not onely where you may get good, but where you may have opportunities to do good to others: every Talent must be answered for; your knowledge, health, &c. use it as you will answer for it, and know 'tis one of the greatest mercies in the world for God to give you hearts in doing good with that he hath given, *Heb. 13. 16.* not for applause, but be good Husbands for God, and consider which way you may attain your ends best by what you give or do. Thus be rich in good works.

18. Live still as before the living God, approve your hearts to him, as knowing you stand or fall unto his judgement. Avoid carefully all offences unto men, for the Lords sake, and their conscience sake; take heed of scandal, and receive all the good from others you can, but stick not too much on mans approbation: disregard not suspicions or reproofs of Godly men, but make not mans prayse to be any part of your reward; it is a small thing for me to be judged of men. Be not much troubled at it if you cannot please all: the bawlings of the malicious should not disturb a soul that is quietly housed with God: that soul is not well stablished in faith that can be so disturbd and distempered by the wrath or words of malicious men. Remember, God himselfe pleases not all; the most of the world are enemies to their Maker upon the account of his
Holy.

Holiness, Justice, &c. and canst thou think to please all? withdraw from the world and your selves unto God, for the consolation of his approbation, and for your felicity: this will save you from hypocrisy, and keep you from the temptations and vexations of the censorious world.

19. Be every day as serious in your preparation for death and judgement, as those that are alwayes certain that it will come, and know not the moment when it will come (*Matth. 24. 49.*) Use often to think seriously before-hand, what death is; what thoughts, what tryals death will put a man upon: what temptations usually accompany our approaching death: what you shall most need at such a time as that: what thoughts are likeliest to possess you then: what you are likeliest to wish for when you must needs die, about spending your time, expending your estate, conversing with others, &c. Ask your selves, what will I wish I had done or been when I come to die? Think what will be most dreadful to a dying man, for thus you have time to escape his judgement: will it not be to think on a life lost in vanity, drencht in worldliness, unreconciled to God, or at least in utter uncertainty of his love? God hath not fore-shewed what will be a dying mans terror, to torment thee but to get out that terror; that which will be most terrible at death, conquer and destroy it presently. *They that were ready went in with the Bridegroom, and the door was shut,* (*Matth. 25. 10.*) Oh happy thou, if while the door is open thou be found ready to go in: woe, if when the door be shut, thou hast thy preparation to make,

make, thy graces to seek. Bethink what you will either wish or fear when you come to die, and when you will say, this should have been done, &c. let it be now done.

20. Rise speedily after every fall by sound repentance, and a fresh recourse to the blood of Christ, Covenant of Grace, and his intercession. Lie not secure in any sin into which thou art lapsed: take heed of delaying and trifling when thy particular repentance should be exercised. Renew thy Covenant, and after thy rising deal faithfully with thy self and God, favour not thy sin, nor flesh, go to the quick, leave no corruption at the bottom: If called to make restitution, to shame thy self before men by confession, stick not at it: take the plainest course, that is, the way of God: And let not any thought of shame, dishonour, or loss, hinder it, for the more it costs thee to rise from sin, the likelier 'tis thou art sound in thy conversion, and the more comfort wilt thou have: otherwise the feares and pains of thy disease will be upon thee, when the though cure would have prevented it: quarrel not at any mans reproof, though they miscarry in it, have mentioned thy faults with passion, &c. take that which is good and be thankful. And after every fall sit not down in perpetual distress, but, as Christ takes the honour of thy cure, take thou the comfort of thy cure when recovered. See thou art truly risen by repentance, and returned to him whom thou hast dishonoured---Thy care must be to see thou be sincere in thy return, and then walk comfortably.

See

See that Satan make not thee walk so as to rob thee of thy comfort, and God of his honour.

Thus having given you twenty Directions, I shall reduce all to these eight Particulars.

1. Do not think strength of grace will be got with ease : you must do that, that in other things is done for the attaining of strength, increase and confirmation : A man cannot attain knowledge in Law, Physick, or any Art, without studying, diligence, unwearied labour and patience through that time that is necessary to attain it. Set your selves to the reading of the *Scripture* and other good books ; study good truths : think not to attain mastery in a day : And if ever such a conceit come in your minds, that you are strong confirmed Christians, do not easily entertain it : there must be time, industry and diligence : ordinarily suspect the conceit you may have of strength and confirmation ; you must grow by degrees : Gods method is to begin like a *grain of mustard-seed* : we are not born men : labour in the proper meanes with patience : infused gifts are given according to the manner of acquiring them : God gives as if our acquisition did attain it : never think of having this without patience, labour and diligence.

2. Grow up in the Church of God, and under his Officers, and Ordinances, and among his people : Do not transplant your selves from the garden and vineyard of the Lord if you will thrive : no prospering in the Commons where weeds will choak, &c. Keep within the Church of God, in the communion of his People, among his Servants, under

der the guidance of his Ministers, for that is the duty of Ministers to bring up, train up, and help the weak ones till they grow to be strong: they are to be Gods Nurses and helpers of the weak in the House of God: Do not think to prosper by breaking over the hedge, under pretence of any right of holiness whatsoever, following any party that would draw you to separation.

3. Make it, a ongst others, the principal study of your lives, to *study the love of God in the Redeemer*, the nature of the new Covenant, and the infinite goodness revealed in the face of a Mediator; how it was his design to attract the hearts of men to the love of God, by revealing his infinite love in the Redeemer, unto which end Christ came for, even to represent Gods goodness in sinners hearts, of their being reconciled to him, and ravishing them with his love. Study the glory and ravishing love of God, and unspeakable goodness in a Redeemer.

4. Live not by sense, or upon worldly hopes, nor in the exercise of it: See that you live a mortified life: take heed of glutting your selves with creatures, or letting your hearts out to any creature, or letting any creature be too dear to you: live not too much on any sensible thing, or upon any worldly hopes or expectations. Shut your eyes to the world: let not your desires run out to the world, and live as much as you can upon the world to come.

5. Let holy self-suspicion always make you fearful of temptation, and keep you out of the Devils way: Would you keep your standing, grow better and strong in grace? let not pride of your hearts,

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hearts, or confidence of your strength, make you meet among any unlawful communion, see any enticing spectacle, or thrust your selves upon temptation : you are never safe if you thrust your selves upon temptation : think with your self, my weakness is great, I must not gaze upon this enticing object, lest my heart take fire ; I am not so strong as to be able to stand against such, &c.

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6. When you cannot attain unto that heat of internal affection you would, *be sure you walk uprightly with God* : sin not wilfully : keep your garments clean : set his Law before your eyes : sin not wilfully for a world : be but found in the way of duty, and God will bless you, and meet you in that way : be as exact in obedience, as if you had that frame of soul you desire.

7. In a special manner keep all your bodily senses and desires in subjection ; mortifie the flesh keep under your carnal desires in a due subjection to the Spirit ; let none of your senses take the reins out of your hands ; keep a dominion over your senses.

Lastly, All your life long belonging to die : let the work of your life be to learn to die. Consider what necessity to the safety and comfort of death to consider frequently, *what assaults will be made upon dying men*, that you may every day fortifie against it, to consider what graces and duties will be most needful and useful then, that you may be most

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most conversing with, and exercising those graces and duties. He that hath well learnt to die, is no weak christian. The strength of your grace lies in the exercise of these things; faithfully practice them, and you will stand when others fall; you will have comfort, when others cast away their comfort; you will die in peace, when others die in horror.

The End of the eighth Sermon.

SER.



SERMON IX.

Heb. 13. 20, 21.

Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ: To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.



IT would give light to these words, if you consider the scope and design of the Apostle in this Epistle to the Hebrews, the sum of which is, He writes to them, that he might animate their spirits against Apostacy from the Doctrine of the Gospel; they were liable to this upon a double account: (1) Partly in respect of those Persecutions to
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which they were exposed; for the Jews were filled with a brutish zeal for the Ceremonies of the Levitical Law, and express the greatest rancour against those, who left *Moses* to follow *Christ*. This is the reason why the Apostle lays down so many preservatives against their revolting from Religion; and he spends one part of this Epistle in a most passionate exhortation to perseverance, and doth in the Tenth Chapter insinuate himself into them; You have already (saith he) tasted the first fruits of affliction, vers. 34. *You took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in your selves, that you have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.* This is that temper the Martyrs have expressed, who have not onely parted with their goods, but with their *lives* for the Gospel: When they came to the Stake, they would not so much as shed a tear to quench those flames, wherein they should ascend to God as in a fiery Chariot. *You took joyfully, &c.* thus he insinuates himself, by representing what they had done, to encourage them to perseverance; and partly he fortifies them against *Back-sliding*, by those terrible judgments which he threatned against *Revoltiers*, as you may read, chap. 6, & 7. (2) As they were liable to this Apostacy upon the account of *Persecution*, so upon the account of the unsettledness and instability of their own spirits. There were several of those who had given up their names to Christ, who did compute the Ceremonies of the Law with the purity of the Gospel: Now the Apostle, to secure them from this mixture, his great design is to represent the vanity and ineffectiveness of

of all the Ceremonial Law, and to express and prove the virtue and efficacy of the Lord Jesus, of his death, which was the substance of all the shadows. And this takes up one great part of his discourse with them.

Now in these two verses he sums up, by way of Recapitulation, all that which he had discoursed off at large, and in them you may observe these two things :

(1) A Description of God, to whom he addresses this prayer.

(2) The Substance of the prayer it self.

The *Description of God*, that he amplifies by the two things : (1) From the Attributes and Qualities of God, (if I may so express it) Now (saith he) *the God of peace*. (2) From the effects of his power and love, *That brought again from the dead, &c.* And these Titles, they are not here set down to adorn his discourse, merely as an ornament, but they have all a peculiar efficacy, as to the obtaining of the request which here he makes for them.

I shall begin with the first, the *Description of God*, from that Attribute, (*Now the God of peace*) The Title that is used in the *Old Testament* frequently is this, [*The Lord of Hosts*] but in the *New* he is called, *The God of peace*. There were darker representations of the mercy and love of God then, the more full discoveries of his grace were reserved till the coming of Christ: Their discoveries under the *Old Testament* were but as the *Day-star*, which usher'd in the *Sun of Righteousness*.

teousness. Now this Title of the *God of peace* imports two things.

(1) That he is the *Author of peace*, and works it.

(2) That he *loves and delights in peace*.

First, That he is the Author of it: And if you consider *Peace* in all its notions and kinds, it is a fruit of God, and that which descends from him. (1) *Peace in Nature* is the harmony that is between all the parts of the world, the union that is between the disagreeing Elements, this is from God; for without him, the whole Creation would presently disband, and return to its first Chaos of confusion. (2) *Civil Peace*, which is among the Societies of men, that which is so amiable and lovely, and which needs no other foil to commend it, and set off its lustre, then the miseries of War; this Peace comes from God also: When there is a subjection to just Laws, this is from God. Every rash hand is able to make a wound, or cast a fire-brand; but it is only the *God of Peace* that is able to heal breaches, to allay those storms that are in a Nation. You know, those showers which render the earth fruitful, descend from Heaven, from God; so all the counsels of peace descend from above: The fiery exhalations ascend from the earth, counsels of war and disturbance proceed from the devilish hearts of men. Or (3) If you consider that *Rational Peace*, which is in the spirits of men, i. e. when the Understanding exercises a coercion and restraint over our licentious Appetites, when all our inferiour Faculties are under the Empire and Conduct

Conduct of Reason; this proceeds also from God: For since the Fall, there is a great deal of tumult, many riots and disorders in the soul of a man. Reason hat's a bad Guide; and our Appetites, those are evil instruments, and do many times hurry Reason from its regular actings. But (4) much more, if you consider *Spiritual Peace*, that peace which doth not onely import an agreement of a man within himself, but the agreement of the Soul with God. This is the fruit of the Spirit; and it is onely God that is able to convey this peace to us. And upon a particular accompt this Title is given to him, by way of Eminency and propriety; as,

(1) He is alone able to allow and dispence this peace to us; for all our sins are injuries committed against him, against his Crown and Dignity; all the Arrests of Conscience are made in the name of God, and therefore it is onely he that can speak peace. As in the *Civil State*, it is an Act of Supremacy to give a pardon; onely he that can condemn is able to speak a pardon, so, it is that God that is our Judge, provoked and incensed by us, he that hath a judicial power to cast body and soul into hell-fire, is alone able to speak peace, and pass a Pardon for us in the Court of Heaven: and this is experienced by a wounded spirit; it is just with such a person as it is with a *Malefactor*, who stands condemned at the Bar, he cannot receive encouragement from any of his Spectators, till the Judge speak peace to him: So, if an Angel from heaven should come and speak to a wounded spirit, it were impossible, unless God did order, command, and dispence it: that the spirit should

receive any peace, because our sins are immediately committed against him.

(2) He is alone able to reveal and discover it. There is nothing harder in the world, than to calm and quiet a disturbed conscience, it must be the same power that makes light to spring out of darkness, that must cause a cheerful serenity in a dark and disconsolate soul. I know there is nothing more easie then that *false peace* which is so universal in the world; for the most amongst us cheat themselves with *presumption*, instead of peace with God, and *security* instead of peace with conscience: but that peace which is solid and true, can onely be revealed by God himself. We have an instance of this in *David*, (*Psal. 51.*) although *Nathan* had told him from God, *Thy sin is pardoned*; yet notwithstanding he saith, *Make thou me to hear joy and gladness, &c* he still addresses himself to God, that he would cause him to hear the voice of pardon and reconciliation, for his soul could not be quiet by the voice of the Prophet. There is so much infidelity in the soul of a man, that when he comes to take a view of his sins in all their bloody aggravations, onely the Spirit of God himself is able to allay the terrors of the conscience: And this he doth by an overpowering light, when he doth in an imperative and commanding manner silence all the doubts of the soul, and establish it in peace with God. Certainly he that shall but consider the terrors, the faintings, the paleness of a wounded conscience, when you shall see a person disrelish all the things of the world upon this account, *Fear-*

ing left God is his enemy; when all discourses that are addressed to him are ineffectual, and but like warm cloathes to a dead carcase, cannot inspire any heat into him. Oh! this shews, onely God is able to reveal peace. So *Job*, *If he hide his face, who is able to be at peace?* There need: no other fury to compleat the misery of a man, than his own accusing conscience. Conscience is a verier devil then the devil himself, and able more to torment and lash the creatnre. Therefore, if that be once awakened, 'tis onely God, to whose Tribunal conscience is liable, which is able to speak peace to the soul. Now you see in what respect this Title, [*The God of peace*] is attributed to him, as he is the *Author* and *worker* of it.

2. As he *Loves* and *Delights* in peace. This is that which is so pleasing to him that, he adopts those into the line of Heaven who are *Peace-makers*, [*Blessed are the Peace-makers, &c.*] This characterises persons to be his children, to be ally'd to him. God, he onely delights in the reflection of *his own Image*; for, those things that we admire in the world, and delight in, do not affect his heart: *He delights not in the strength of the horse, he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.* Nothing attracts his eye and heart, but his own *similitude* and *resemblance*; and therefore, where he sees *peaceable dispositions*, this is that which endears the soul to him, and makes it amiable in his eyes. You may judge of his delight in peace by this, it is that grace which in especial manner prepares us for communion

with him ; for, we can never really honor nor enjoy him , unless we bring to him those dispositions , which (if I may so speak) are in himself. And therefore it is no wonder that those have little peace of conscience, who make so little conscience of peace. You know , when God appeared to *Eliab* , he did not appear in the *Storm* , nor in the *Fire* , but in the *small still voice* ; and when *Elisha* was transported with *anger* , he was fain to allay that passion by *Musick* , that so he might be prepared for the holy motions of the Spirit ; he call'd for an *Instrument* , and then the Spirit moved in him. I bring it for this end , to shew , how God *delights in peace* , and he will only maintain communion with those , that are of calm and peaceable spirits. So much way as we give to rash anger , so much proportionably do we let in the Devil , and cast out the *God of peace*.

Now, the reason why this Title is given to God is upon a double account , partly with respect to the *Blood of the everlasting Covenant* , which made peace between God and us ; partly with respect to the *Covenant it self* , which is founded in that Blood.

(1) In respect of the *Blood of the Everlasting Covenant*. For, it was the blood of Christ that hath sprinkled Gods Throne , and made peace in heaven. You shall read therefore , when Christ came into the world , 'tis said , (*Luk 2. 14.*) that the heavenly Host appeared and sang , *Glory to God in the highest , on earth peace , &c.* Since the *Fall* , God and man are *enemies* , there is a reciprocal enmity between God and Man , God hates the
Creature

Creature as it is unholy, and man hates God as he is just, the avenger of sin, the Author of the Law, &c. Now, *Christ* was the *Umpire* that composed this difference, he was *God* and *Man* in one person, and so being ally'd to both, he was a fit person to reconcile both. He was (as *Job* speaks) a *Days-man* between us. He hath paid every farthing that was due; for he did not compound with God, but paid the utmost that was due to him. He it is that hath reconciled us to God by the power of his Spirit, in changing and renewing our natures, and creating in us those dispositions which are like to God; so that his Blood is the foundation of this peace. And now, God appears to us, not as a consuming fire, but as a refreshing light, full of calmness, serenity and peace towards us. Christ he brought more honor to God by his obedience, then we brought dishonour by our transgression; and therefore without any injury to God, he might be at peace with us. You know, all our sins were but the acts of *finite creatures*, and onely *infinite* in regard of the *object* against whom they were committed. But the blood of Christ was of *infinite value* in regard of the *Subject*; for, he was God, and the enriching union of the Deity conveyed such value and worth to his blood, that he was able to appease God, and not onely to free us from condemnation, but to make us the favourites of God. We are not onely pardoned, but preferr'd upon the account of his blood.

(2) He is the *God of peace*, as with respect to the blood of Christ, which is the purchase of peace;

peace; so with respect to the *Covenant* which is made between God and us (*through the blood of the ever lasting Covenant.*) There are three sorts of *Covenants* amongst men, some are *Covenants of Friendship and Amity*, some are *Covenants of Trade and Commerce*, and some are *Covenants of Assistance and Help*. Now all these qualifications meet in this *Covenant*, which is made between God and Believers: It is a *Covenant of Peace and Friendship*, for now we stand upon terms of amity with God, *Those who were strangers and enemies, are now reconciled.* And there is between God and us perfect peace, there is a *League* (as the Scripture speaks) between God and the Creature. It is a *Covenant of Trade*, there is now a way opened to Heaven, we may now ascend to God in duties of holiness, and God descend to us by the excitations of his grace, and influences of joy. And 'tis a *Covenant of Assistance*, for he promises not onely to give us the reward of the *Covenant*, but to secure unto us the Condition; he promises to enable us to discharge the conditions of *Faith* and *Repentance*. Now upon this account, of that *Covenant* which is founded in the blood of Christ, he is the *God of peace* to his people.

[*Use*] Is by way of *Conviction*. This may discover to us how distant their temper is from God, who are *enemies to peace*: We unman our selves, we unchristian our selves, so far as we are opposite to this blessed temper of peace. Certainly, as disturbed water cannot make any reflection unto us of that face that looks into it, so when our

spirits

Spirits are disturbed by animosities, exasperations, heats and divisions, 'tis impossible for us to see the Image of God, as he is the God of peace. And certainly, there is no more doleful consideration in the world then this, That *Man*, whom God made a sociable creature, who hath all the engagements and endearments laid upon him, which may cause him to live in peace and gentleness towards these, who are of the same nature with him, yet that in fierceness our heats should exceed those of the most salvage creatures. Man comes into the world naked, and altogether unarmed, as if he were designed for the *Picture of Peace*; but could you look into the hearts of men, you would find there such tumults, divisions, such seeds of enmity against their fellow-creatures, that Tigers and Lions are calm and peaceable in comparison of them. Now, how is this distant from the temper of the *God of peace*? 'Tis very strange to consider, that when promises are made to bury all differences, as rubbish under the foundation, that nevertheless the great work of many persons should be, onely to revive those former animosities, to make those exasperations fresh and keen upon their own spirits: But is this to imitate the God of peace? These, to promote divisions and disturbances among us, cloath their enemies with the *Livery of shame and reproach*, that so they may be baited by their fury; that make it their design to represent that party, which they think is dissonant from them, with the most odious appearances, (you know this is the old Art) and those *showers of calumnies* which
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are in the world, they usually precede the storm of persecution. The devil was first a *Liar*, and then a *Murderer*; and those who are of his seed, they follow his *Art*. In the Primitive times, all the Persecutions of the Heathens arose from the reproaches of Christians; so it is now. It is an easie thing to blast the name of those persons, who are design'd for ruine. But if the contending Parties would consider, (if I may call one Party *contending* which is onely liable to Penalties, and is resolv'd to bear them patiently) how *unlike* this is to that *God of peace*, me-thinks it should allay the rancour that is in mens spirits, and make an attonement between all the differences that is between them.

(2) If onely peace come from God, you may from hence take a trial of that peace that is within you, (for hitherto I have been onely discoursing of Civil peace) whether it be the effect of this God of peace. I know nothing more common in the world then *presumption*; there is a *false peace*, which doth not arise from the knowledge of a mans happiness, but from the ignorance of his misery: Peace, which is onely like a Torch to shine in the night, or like *Players*, that glitter onely by Torch-light; so is the false peace men cherish in their bosom, meerly upon this account, because they do not bring their souls to the light of the Word, they never had it from this God of peace; because,

(1) God never speaks peace to a soul, but in the way of holiness and obedience: And therefore you shall find this the counsel of the Scripture,
Acquaint

Acquaint thy self with God, and be at peace. Our peace is found in the way of duty : and there are none who are more blessed with the peace of conscience , then those who with the greatest fervour, frequency, and delight , maintain communion with God in holy Duties: For, as friendship among men is cherished and preserved by visits and conversations , so, our peace with God is preserved by those visits we make to Heaven in prayer.

(2) That peace that comes from God , always calues in us a war with sin; for God's Covenant with us is Offensive and Defensive , and therefore it is impossible any person should have true and solid peace, that waking tranquillity of soul, which is the reward of holiness and obedience that entertains sin ; for every sin thou dost wilfully commit , 'tis an act of hostility against God, 'tis that which makes him thy enemy , and makes thee an enemy to him. As *Jehus* said, *What peace, so long as the whoredoms, &c.* so, what peace can there be , so long as thou dost indulge thy self in sin , and make it thy business to gratifie thy outward senses , though it be to the displeasure of God ? 'Tis the greatest mercy in the world to rob such persons of their peace, and to discover to them their danger ; they are onely capable of true peace, by the knowledge of that which is false. Therefore bring your selves to this trial , whether or no doth that peace which now you please your selves in, cause in you an eternal hatred of sin ? doth it set you at a distance from your most beloved lusts ? Then it is that
peace

peace that springs from God. The greatest part of the world are in a state of *war* with God, though they do not feel the effects of that war: True indeed, God doth not always draw the sword, either of Famine, Pestilence, or War, against a Nation, and yet they may be acting in a most hostile way against God: So for a person, God may not blast thy estate, or send diseases upon thy person, or raise a tumult in thy conscience, and make a conspiracy of thy thoughts and passions against thy peace: thou maist be quiet within, and yet have war with God, because, as in the world, there may be a *Truce*, when there is no *Peace*, the War may still continue, though there be a Truce between two Princes: or rather, there is not a truce between God and the sinner, but, as a Town that is besieged for many days, may not feel the battery of their enemy, because he is undermining them to blow them up at once; so God doth not many times make his battery against a sinner, but he is undermining them, and the fall at the last will be dreadful, if there be not a composition.

Use 2.] By way of Exhortation; Let me press you all to follow peace, it is a duty which the Gospel enjoins with the greatest vehemency, with the greatest force of words and expressions. The Apostle, when he is to seal up his affection to them, he doth it with that prayer, (2 *Thess.* 3. 16.) *Now the God of peace himself give you peace always, by all means:* What strange expressions! First, he gives you here the Title of *the God of peace*, and then he saith, [Himself] *The God of peace himself.*

There's

There's a great deal of force in that word; Peace is so excellent a blessing; and there is such an abhorrence in our corrupt nature to it, that it is onely the *Lord himself* that is able to effect it: As if the Apostle had said, The Lord must bow the Heavens, he must come down *himself* to create peace among you; and to express the greater vehemency of his desire, he saith, *Give you peace always, by all means.* So another Scripture, pursue peace, *Follow peace with all men*, a word that imports our *pursuit* after it, though it *run* from us. This is the strain and tenor of the Gospel, and this because you as Christians. When Christ came to purchase our peace, he came as a Lamb, an Innocent and meek creature, *Behold the Lamb* of God. When the holy Spirit descended to seal the priviledge of peace to us, he descended in the form of a Dove; a gaul-less Creature in whom there is no ranker nor bitterness. What a strong ingagement should this be upon all of us, to pursue and promote peace. And for your encouragement consider.

(1) That in the Times of the Gospel all the promises, do as it were empty themselves into this blessing, the blessing of peace. Thus Isa. 11. 6. &c. You shall find there a gracious promise, respecting the Times of the Gospel. *The Lyon shall lye down with the Lamb.* &c. That I observe from thence is *this*, that God here promises to cause an universal peace and unity, under the Gospel, though it be as difficult as to perswade the most disagreeing natures to a peaceable Cohabitation. For here the Scripture instances in those Creatures, between which there is the most naturall, and therefore the most fierce animosities. The Lord will reconcile men, though their differences

ces be never so great. What is too hard for the God of
 peace to effect? Is not God of infinite power, of infinite
 love? there it should quicken us to pursue peace.
 (1) By prayer to him, because he is able to effect it :
 certainly that God that was able to bring Order into
 the World, when it was a meer lump and mass of
 confusion, is able to bring peace and to unite our spi-
 rits. And it is observable, the greater our differ-
 ences and divisions are, the more will the power of
 this God appear in reconciling it. 'Tis said in the
 Psalms, that *God's Throne is in darknesses*, i. e. His
 ways of providence are very difficult for us to trace
 and find out : and therefore, when our divisions are at
 the highest, he is able by one word to allay the storm.
 This should encourage us in prayer. This is the
 course of God to glorifie himself, by putting a stop to
 the greatest troubles, when nearest to us, and to work
 out one contrary by another. To give you some
 instances if so we may incourage our faith and quicken
 our prayer to God for this blessing. Consider how still
 God hath made *difficulties the way for enjoyment* ; for
 instance, The promises that *Sarah* should be the Mo-
 ther of a child ; but he made way for that by her dead
 womb : for all that numerous Progeny, which like the
 Stars of the Skye descended from her. That he first
 mained *Jacob*, and then gave him the blessing. He
 brought *Joseph* from the Prison to a Princely Pallace.
 First *David* was harassed with troubles, and then his
 head was deckt with the imperial Crown. So if you
 look into the Kingdome of Christ, who would have
 thought that a few *Fishermen*, should have advanced
 the Empire of Christ in the World ; had you lived to
 have seen those despicable beginnings, when a few
 unlearned

unlearned men were the Hearalds and Preachers of Christ, how would this have caused you to fail and sink in your spirits; and yet the Gospel hath been preached in all the parts of the world, and that by a few *Fishermen*. The *Providences* of God are likethose plated Pictures, if you look one way upon them, there is the appearance of a Serpent; if you look on the other side, there's the appearance of an Angel; so here: many times God is pleased to suffer exasperations to go very high, that so his power may appear more eminent in the compose of them. He is that enables the faith of his people to draw water out of the Rock, when the Fountain is dry; that makes meat to come out of the Eater, (as in *Sampson's Riddle*) that is able to bring a peaceable harmony out of devouring differences: and therefore it should quicken our prayers to him.

(2) To make us more serious in our endeavours after peace. Consider, What a dishonour it is to the Gospel; that those that professe themselves Sons of the same God, Members of the same Christ, Temples of the same Spirit, should be at deadly jars one with another. It is strange and unnatural that *Lyllies* should prove thorns to one another: that those who are *Saints in pretence*, should be Devils in practice to one another: that Gods Dyamonds should cut one another; this is very strange, yet thus it is. But how especially, it is most sad, when *Religion* which should restrain and bridle our passions, is made fuel and incentives of them: How far distant is it from the counsel of the Apostle, *Rom. 14. 10.* where he speaks concerning their lesser differences, *One values one day above another, &c.* what's his counsel? he speaks

as a person that was fill'd with bowels and compassion : Oh, saith he, let not not him that doth not esteem the day judge him that doth ; *For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ*, there we shall appear all upon a level, stand upon equal ground, and receive our final doom from him : This therefore should calm our spirits. Why may there not be some differences in judgment, without division in affection ; for it is as impossible that all judgments should be of the same extent, as all our faces to be of the same colour and figure. Therefore consider what an injury it is to our profession, how doth it obscure the glory of God, and lustre of our Religion ?

(3) Doth not the *publick Enemy* rejoyce over us, I mean the *Papists* ? do they not warm themselves at the sparks of our divisions : for you know the old Maxim of, *Divide, and Reign* : Therefore it should compose our spirits, and quicken us to labour after union. *Unmortifi'd lusts* are thence, whence all Wars and enmitie springs in the world. The Apostle *Paul*, when he would compose their differences, he doth not lay down Rules to decide their controversies, but corrects their secret passions, pride, self-seeking, revenge, &c. this being the seed of all disturbances in the Church : And although these lusts may not be conspicuous and visible to the eyes of men, yet they are certainly the fuel of our distempers.

The sum of all is this ; Those that have the Spirit of God, they cannot but mourn and be sensible of these divisions. I know a great part among us are unconcern'd, some rejoyce, those
that

that are rather buried in the affairs of the world, and incumbered with much business, or those that are steeped in the pleasures of sense, are altogether unaffected with these things, and stand as *Newters*, dis-regarding all events: But the Saints of God cannot but mourn over them, when our divisions hinder the progress of the Gospel, and serviceable to nothing but to the Kingdom of darkness. Therefore I beseech you, let what hath been spoken quicken you in your prayers to God, to *pray for the peace of Jerusalem*, (that's the least effect of our love and desires after peace) and by all endeavours to labour to bring back peace to us, that we may see that *Prophecie* fulfilled in our time, that *the Lord shall be one, and his Name one amongst us*.

Secondly, The Apostle describes God by the *effects of his power and love*, [*That brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus*] The Resurrection of Christ from the dead is one of the most transcendent testimonies of God's *love and power* towards us.

(1) Of his Love; because as the *Anger* of God was that which crucifi'd our Saviour, so on the contrary, it must be his *Love* that should raise and restore him. Christ, when he died, he looked upon God as an *Enemy*, as a *Judge*, and as those *Colours* which we see conveyed to us, answerable to the *Medium* through which we see them; as, if we look through a coloured glass, we see the object of that colour: So the Lord Jesus, when he was upon the Cross, looked upon God through the black cloud of our sins, and through the red

cloud of his Father's wrath, and so died as a Sacrifice to Divine Justice. But when he was raised from the grave, that was the testimony of God's love to him, and of his love to us; for he died as our *Surety*, he was *arrested* for our *debt*, he was cast into the *Grave* as into a *Prison*: But by his *Resurrection* he was redeemed from *Prison* and *Judgment*. And therefore you shall find, when Christ was risen, he salutes his Disciples with this, *Peace be unto you*, (*Luk. 24. 31.*) There was the dawning of peace at the *Incarnation* of Christ; for then the Angels sung, *Peace upon earth*; but the compleat Sun-shine of peace was at his *Resurrection*, when he had made full and compleat satisfaction to God's Justice; for this was a clearing of him before all the world, when God rais'd him from the grave. And in this respect it was very agreeable for the Apostle to say, *The God of peace, that brought again, &c.*

(2.) It was the effect of *Infinite Power*. You know, 'tis naturally impossible for a dead body to quicken it self, to revive; but for the Lord Jesus, who had the load of the sins of all the Elect upon him, who was, as it were, secured in the grave by God's Justice and Power, for him to rise again: This must be an effect of *Infinite Power* in the great God. This raising of Christ, sometimes 'tis attributed to the *Son*, being *God equal* with the Father; but here 'tis attributed to *God*: And therefore, when the Scripture would speak with the greatest magnificence of the *Power of God*, it expresses it thus, *That Power which raised Jesus Christ from the dead*. When Christ wrought deliverance

liverance for the lost world, all those who were committed to his charge: This could be no less than the work of an Infinite Power. And upon this account also it is very proportionable to the design of the Apostle; for that Prayer he makes to God is for that, which onely can be accomplished by *infinite Love*, and *infinite Power*, i. e. to make the Christian *Hebrews* perfect in every, &c.

I come to a further description. *He that brought again from the dead [our Lord Jesus.]* The Title of the *Lord Jesus* was onely given to our Saviour after his Resurrection; he was called *Lord* before, and *Jesus* before; but these two Titles were never united till after his Resurrection; *They came to see the place where the body of the Lord Jesus lay*; the reason was this, Because the Resurrection of Christ was a solemn Proclamation to the world, that *Christ was the Son of God*; 'tis true, this Title was given to him immediately upon his Conception, but it was never compleatly declared to the world, till after his Resurrection; for before, Christ was a *Prince in disguise*, the beams of his *Divinity* was abated by the veil of his *Humanity*; but then he was declared by power to be the Son of God.

It follows. [*That great Shepherd of the sheep.*] For the opening of this,

(1) We will consider this Title of Christ.

(2) The Person for whom this Title relates.

First, This Title, [*The great Shepherd.*] 'Tis a wonderful condescension in Christ, that he will take upon him the Title of a *Shepherd*, that which

rather expresses *Love and Care*, then *Power and Dominion*; yet he is pleased to assume this Title to express his affection to us. For the opening of it, wherein he appears to be the *great Shepherd*, I shall lay down these particulars.

(1) He is great in the *Dignity of his Person*; for he that is Lord of Angels, is become the *Shepherd of the sheep*; and the *humiliation of his Person* in this respect, is the *exaltation of his Office*: It is looked upon in the world as a mean and low employment, to have the care and inspection of a Flock; but now, herein appears the love of Christ, he was pleased to become our *Shepherd*, that so he might secure and bring us to the Fold of Heaven, and there make us to feed upon those Pastures, and to drink of those Rivers of pleasure which flow from the presence of God.

(2) In the *derivation of his Authority*; that Authority which is communicated to him, whereby he is our Shepherd, and that is originally from God himself; it is not by any mediate deputation, but from God himself. He is our Shepherd, and hath a Title to his Flock upon a double account: (1) They are committed to him as his *Charge and custody*, (*Joh. 6. 37, &c.*) All the Elect of the World was given by God the Father to Christ, not by way of *Alienation*, but by way of *Opigneration*, as so many pledges which he was to bring to grace and glory; and this Charge he doth most fully execute, for there is none missing of those committed to him. (2) They are given to him by way of *Reward and Recompence*, for all his Blood and Sufferings, (*Isa. 53. 10.*) The Lord

Lord Jesus put such a value on souls, that he purchased an interest in them by his own blood ; and he thinks himself exceedingly recompenced for all his Pains on the Cross, Agonies in the Garden, Temptations in the Wilderness, &c. if souls will submit to his care. And here observe the course of Heaven, God would endear souls to Christ upon all reasons, by vertue of his command, and that charge he gives to them, and by vertue of his own purchase.

(3) If you consider the *extent* of his care and affection, for all the Saints of the world, those who are dispersed in all places, in all Ages, they are all his Flock ; and therefore 'tis the Royalty of his Administration, (*Joh. 10. 16.*) *There shall be one Fold, and one Shepherd.* As Christ is the onely Catholick King, so he is the onely Universal Bishop ; for all other shepherds have but particular portions of his Flock committed to their charge ; and they should be such portions as they have regard to, and are under their inspection. And at the last day, all his sheep shall congregate together, and stand at his right hand. All the Saints of God that are now scattered, as so many Stars in the Firmament, shall be united in one Constellation, when they shall appear in glory before him.

(4) In respect of his endowments and qualifications, which fit him for the discharge of his Office. And

(1) Take notice of his affection and love to us, and that is the wonder of heaven and earth, Christ laid down his life for his sheep, (*Joh. 10. 11.*) This is strange ; that Christ should be a sheep for

the slaughter, that he might become our Shepherd; that he should be a Sacrifice, before he could take this Office upon him: Other sheep lay down their lives for the Shepherd, but Christ laid down his life for the sheep: So great was his love, that it brought him from Heaven to seek and find those that were lost; he left a Palace, to come to a Wilderness; a Throne of Heaven, to come to a Fold here upon Earth. We read of David, that he exchanged a *Sheep-hook* for a *Scepter*; but Christ quite contrary, he chang'd a *Scepter* for the *Rod and Staff of the Shepherd*. It was said by one, There is nothing so conspicuous in Christ, as the *prodigality of his love* to us. Oh! do but consider *how great love* that was, that should make him to die for us, that he might bring us home to his Fold. We were all of us like *erring sheep*, who had straid from him, and fell to the *Lord of the soil* as strange Cattle: we were gotten to the possession of *the god of this world*, the Lord Christ would buy us off from thence; though we forfeited our *rights in him*, yet he would not lose *his right in us*, but he laid down his life that he might reduce us to his fold; that of *Wolves*, he might make us *Lambs*, and fit us for the comforts of his presence.

(2) In respect of his *exact diligence and inspection over them*: When but one sheep went astray from his fold, we read, he left the ninety and nine, and went and sought for that One, *Luk. 15.* where we have that *Parable*, to express the diligence and watchfulness of Christ over his sheep. There is no person, be he never so mean,
never

never so obscure, though lost in the number and account of the world, if he be one of Christ's sheep, he is always under his inspection and watchfulness. We read of the *High-priest*, that he carried the names of the *Tribes* upon his *Breast-plate*, the Lord Christ carries the names of all his sheep in his *Heart*; therefore, *Rev. 13.* speaking concerning the Saints, all that dwell upon earth, *whose names are writ in the book of life.* His diligence and care is so exact, that he hath all their names writ in his Book: He that tells the Stars, counts their hairs, and always exercises the most watchful providence over them for good. You know, sheep are either liable to *rage*, or *erring* and *wandering*; Christ's diligence is such, that he protects them from the rage of Satan, reduces them from all their wandering, and brings them home to himself.

(3) In making proportionable all their services and sufferings to those degrees of strength, which he gives to them, (*Isa. 40. 11.*) He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. Christ always makes a proportion between the services, sufferings, and strength he calls them to. He it is that with that tenderness speaks to Peter, *Peter, lovest thou me? feed my lambs, &c.* he hath provided for them the most ample and most satisfying nourishment, the Ordinances of the Gospel, the Word, the Promises, which are the breasts of consolation; these are all provided by him for his people. And in this respect he is the great Shepherd, for he doth
not

not onely allow the n means , but blesses the means to them : He is able to enlighten the dark mind, and he can make pliable the stubborn will, and he can spiritualize drossie affections, which all other shepherds in the world are not able to effect.

(4) He is the great shepherd, if you consider his power to preserve them from danger ; not onely those dangers which respect Satan, (for that fell under his care before) but those diseases to which they are liable, which threaten ruine : Other shepherds possibly may cure diseases, but not defend them from danger. Christ it is that gives eternal life to his sheep, he begins the life of holiness, which though at present is but as a spark in the Sea, yet he keeps it alive till it shall break forth into a triumphant flame. That life that is encompassed with so many enemies, and liable to so many weaknesses, the Lord Jesus will bring forth judgment to victory, and will make them to be powerful over spiritual and eternal enemies.

The sum is this, The Lord Christ is so perfect a Shepherd, so compleat, as to all the qualifications of that Office, that the Prophet David breaks forth into exultation, (*Psal. 23.*) *The Lord is my shepherd, &c.* and then afterward expresses all those provisions which are made for him by God as a Shepherd, *He makes me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside the still waters, &c.* So that you see, Christ, whether for diligence, love, tenderness, for preserving us from danger, for securing us to life eternal, he is onely the great Shepherd ; he is the God of shepherds

as well as the God of sheep, and all other shepherds are but inferior to him, and must be accountable to him for the souls of his sheep, which are more valuable then all the world.

It follows, *The great Shepherd* [*of the sheep.*] I shall not spend any time in making any resemblance between the people of God and the sheep: only,

(1) They are sheep in respect of their *Innocency*. You know, of all creatures the sheep are unarmed; other creatures, either they are armed with strength, or skin, or swiftness, to guard themselves, and offend others; but the sheep hath neither the strength of the *Lion*, the craft of the *Fox*, swiftness of the *Deer*, &c. and of all creatures is most weak, inoffensive, and most liable to dangers and injuries. Of all persons, Gods people are most liable to danger, and, when out of Christs protection, the weakest persons in the world.

(2) In respect of their *Meekness*. A sheep is an emblem of meekness, that's their temper, and therein they imitate Christ, who hath propounded himself to be their pattern, *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly, &c.* both these qualities are expressed by the Prophet, (*Isa. 11.*) where speaking concerning the times of the Gospel, saith, *The Lamb shall lie down with the Wolf, &c.* now, where the Prophet expresses their safety, there he expresses their innocency and meekness. This is the reason why the Prophet saith, *For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter*: because of all creatures most liable to injuries, that which doth least resent them: And, where ever the

the grace of Christ comes, it sweetens the most cruel nature, and polishes the most rough disposition, and makes them to be like *Christ, meek and lowly.*

3. In regard of their *profitableness*; for, of all creatures, they are most profitable, the food, as to their flesh, the cloth, as to their fleece. And the people of God, however they are exposed to the contempts and injuries of the world, they are the most *profitable*, for, were it not for them, the whole frame of Nature would fall into pieces, the Stars would fall like leaves in Autumn, and all the Elements would fall into confusion; we see it by one *Lot*, who kept showers of fire and brimstone from falling on *Sodom*, till he was got out of it. And it is the people of God, for whom this frame of nature is continued, and when they are brought into the field of Christ, the Justice of God will have a solemn triumph over all the world.

(4) As they are liable to *wandering*: Sheep are wandering creatures, and when strayed, not able to reduce themselves. And in this respect the people of God are sheep, they have a thousand allurements to draw them from the ways of God; and, if God should not guide them by his eye, 'tis impossible they should go in the way that leads to heaven. Therefore *David* saith, *I have gone astray like a lost sheep, seek thy servant, &c.* (Psal. 119. 176.) This shall suffice to make the Parallel and Resemblance of the people of God and sheep.

The second Argument is this, That he hath design'd Christ to be the Shepherd of the Church, *The great Shepherd of the sheep*; this is another Argument

argument and evidence that he is reconciled to us ; and that he is the *God of peace* : For when God gave Christ to be our Sacrifice, and raised him up to be our Shepheard, these are the most clear testimonies of his love : For, although Christ now sits in heaven, and *all the Angels of God worship him*, yet he doth not disdain to exercise the same care, and to expresse the same love to his people, that he did when he was upon earth. All the Offices of Christ expresse Gods love to us, for he feeds us as a *Prophet*, died for us as a *Priest*, governs and defends us as he is *King* ; and all these meet together in this Title, feeding of us, dying for us, defending of us ; as he was *God* he loved us, as he was *Man* he died for us. This doth exprets the effects of his two Natures in this Title, and therefore an admirable evidence that God is at peace with us.

It follows, [*Through the blood of the everlasting Covenant*.] The blood of Christ is that which sements God and us together: For you must remember, our *original peace* with God was broken, that peace we have with him now is called *Reconciliation*; it is as a broken bone, which, well set, is stronger then before, because nature conveys most liberal supplies to the weakest part ; so now, being reconciled to God through the blood of his Son, we stand upon surer terms with him then we did in Innocency : The *blood of Christ* speaks better things for us, then all our *sins* speak against us, it speaks peace to our souls, and that in heaven purchased by his death. Christ died as a *Testator*, and bequeathed to the Church a *Legacy of peace* ;

peace ; he lives as the *Executor* of that Covenant, and now in heaven conveys to us the blessing of peace, which he bequeath'd in his death. And as our peace was founded in his *Blood* , so it is conserv'd by his *Intercession* ; he appears in the Court of Heaven as our *Embassador* , to make up all those differences which fall out between God and us: for you know, Amity and Friendship is kept between *Forreign States* , by their *Residents* and *Agents* that are kept in their several Courts ; so, we have an *Agent* in the Court of Heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, that was raised from the dead ; And, as a Believer falls into sin, which is a breach of peace between God and us, so that peace is made up by the exercise of Repentance on our part, and by sprinkling of Christs blood upon us on Gods part. The renewed exercise of Repentance, and Application of Christ's blood, preserves that peace that is between God and Believers. And (to sum up the force of the Argument) when we had fallen from God, and it did not consist with the Majesty of God to make peace with us without satisfaction, then was he pleased to pay our Ransom out of his own Treasury, and redeem us by the blood of his Son, so all his Attributes might shine forth in their lustre, and glory in our Salvation, and that upon sure terms we might be able to challenge an interest in his favour and love.

It follows, *Through the blood of the [Everlasting Covenant.]* Its call'd an *Everlasting Covenant* in two respects.

(1) In opposition to the *Old Covenant* , which
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was made with *Adam* in Innocency, but that Covenant which secures to us the reward of that *life eternal*, did not secure to us the Condition, that was *perfect obedience*: And in reference to this Old Covenant, sometimes the Gospel is called a *New Covenant*, sometimes a *Better Covenant*, because it supplies all weaknesses in the first Covenant; not as if the Law of God was weak or faulty in respect of it self, for the Law is *holy, just and good*, but weak in respect of us; for it is impossible that *that Covenant*, by the breach of which sin & death came into us, should reconcile us to God, and appease his anger; and therefore God contrived another Covenant for us, a Covenant in the Gospel, that was made with us in *Christ*, and this is called an *Everlasting Covenant*, because it remains for ever, the tenor of it shall not be chang'd; for, the first Covenant is onely abrogated and made null, while frustrated as to the intent it was first given.

(2) Its call'd an *everlasting Covenant*, as it brings to those that are parties in it an everlasting glory: So the Lord Jesus his blood is called an *everlasting Redemption*, for it ransomes the souls of men from that *eternal death* to which they were liable, and gives them a title to *everlasting life*; for this Covenant which now God hath made with us, it not only secures the *Reward*, but the *Conditions* to which the reward is made; for God saith, *I will plant my fear in your hearts, that you shal not depart from me.*

I have now gone over the Title, and that in order to the Prayer, which follows, [*Make you perfect, &c.*] the general sum of it is this, That God of peace, who is reconciled to us in his Son, as he is the *Father of mercies* to us, so he is the *fountain of holiness* to us; & in this respect we can onely expect from him the *treasures of grace*, as he is the *God of peace*, for God, as he is our *Judge*, dispences to sinners nothing but revenge, there is nothing to be expected but the curse of his Law, the execution of that
Sentence

Sentence of death from him. For although the world despise holiness as a base and contemptible thing, they had rather be *ungracious* than *inglorious* in the eyes of men, and upon this account they are afraid to be *holy*, lest they should be the publick scorn and contempt of the place wherein they live: although holiness is of so low price in the world, yet in Heaven, next to God, Christ, and the Spirit, Holiness is the most rich Jewel: That, God can bestow upon us, and therefore we must first look upon him as the *God of peace*, before we can beg any grace from him. And this is the reason why the Apostle represents God by these Titles, that he might encourage the *H. brews* to believe God would grant this request. When Christ died for us, it was not his design only to quiet our consciences, but to quicken our souls; not onely to free us from *damnation*, but from the *domination of sin*: And therefore you shall find these two are joyned together, (*Tit. 2. 14.*) *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, & purifie unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* The death of Christ, as there was a *value* in it to purchase Gods favour, so there was a *virtue* in it to restore to us Gods Image. And the account of his dying for us it is, that we must expect the least degree of grace and holiness from God. And this is the reason why the Apostle prefaces this, *Now the God of peace, &c.*

I know you expect I should say something, — I shall onely say thus much, It is neither fancy, faction, nor humor that makes me not to comply, but meerly for fear of offending God. And if after the best means used for my Illumination, as prayer to God, discourse, study, I am not able to be satisfi'd concerning the lawfulness of what is required; if it be my unhappiness to be in an error, surely *Men* will have no reason to be angry with me in this world, and I hope God will pardon me in the next.

The End of the Ninth Sermon.



SERMON X.

Exod. 3. 2, 3, 4, 5.

And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.



ET us take a short view of the foregoing Verses; and that this may be the more useful and profitable to us, we may take notice, That as in the former Chapter there is described *Moses's* preservation to his future employment;

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ployment; so in this Chapter there is described his preparation, and his fitting for that employment, *i. e.* by a *Vision*, or rather a suitable *Apparition*, in which God discovered unto *Moses* his care of the people, of whom *Moses* was to be a speedy deliverer: You have here in the words read unto you the preparation afforded to *Moses* for the great work, of being call'd to be *Israel's* deliverer, and in this preparation you may take notice of these three principal parts.

1. An *Apparition* that is here presented to the view of *Moses*, *A burning, though not a consumed bush.*

2. *Moses* care to observe it, *I will turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.* And then,

3. Gods Monitory, Precept, or Admonition, which he afforded unto *Moses*, when he was drawing near to see this wonder, in which we have principally considerable two parts.

1. This Precept propounded, 1 Negatively, *That he should not draw near.* 2 Affirmatively, *That he should put off his shoes from off his feet.*

2. You have considerable the Reason or Argument, whereby God doth back this Precept or Admonition, *i. e.* *Because that place whereon he stood was holy ground.* The time would fail me if I should go over all these parts, we shall onely touch on the two former, the *Apparition* which *Moses* saw, and *Moses's* desire to observe it, of which I shall onely speak transitorily, and insist on the latter more fully, which I chiefly intend.

1. For the *Apparition*, or emblematical discovery

covery of the estate of the Church in the *burning* and yet *unconsumed bush*. And herein take notice of three things.

1. The lowness and weakness of the Church, represented by a *Bush*.

2. The cruelty of the Churches enemies, signifi'd and represented by *Fire*.

3. The eminency of its preservation, though in the fire, yet *unconsum'd*.

And in this onely take notice, that the Church is compared to a *bush* for two reasons; 1 In regard of its deformity and blackness, and uncomeliness. 2 In regard of its weakness and brittleness. The Church is uncomely in regard of sin, and weak in regard of suffering, and God sees it best that it should be thus with them to humble them, and to shew his goodness to accept them, and to love them, and make them long for their future beauty; and hereby God makes them more conformable to their Head, hereby he makes them endeavor to look after inward beauty and glory; hereby he puts them on a life of faith, and takes them off from living by sense, and creature comforts, and from being entangled with creature-comforts. And hereby he shows how little he regards the beauty and glory of this life, which he denies to the best of his people: And hereby he shows, that there is a better state of appearance and glory approaching; and therefore the people of God are not to be censured under their blackness and deformity, either in regard of sin or suffering; their happiness is not to be judg'd by its outward appearance, because this life is but the

obscurity of the Church; we see them like the *Tents of Kedar*, but we do not see how like the *Curtains of Solomon they shall be*. 2 The people of God should take heed of expecting that glory of this world, which is not promised to them, and to set their hearts on heaven. And you may see the reason, why wicked men stumble so much at the *outside* of God's Worship, because there is no *outward bravery and beauty* to allure them to the true Worship.

2. The Church is compared to a *Bush*, in regard of its *weakness* and *brittleness*. Note, That it is not compar'd to a strong *Rurdy Oke*, but to a weak brittle *Bush*. God loves to bring his Church into a low and weak state and condition; as it is here compared to a *Bush*, so other-where to a *Vine*, a *Dove*, a *Lamb*, and a *Sheep*, all weak creatures. Sometimes the Church is said to be fatherless and destitute; and as our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, was said to be *weak*, a *worm* and *no man*; and as the *Apostle* said, *Suffered through weakness*. And this makes them to trust in God, and puts them to rest on his strength; *When we are weak, then are we strong*; outward *weakness* will make us look the more to Christ for *spiritual strength*; the weakness of our state doth shew, the spiritual strength God gives to his people for the upholding of them. And this weakness of his Church doth exceedingly confound his enemies, when so weak a company shall be delivered, not onely *against*, but *by the strength* of men; and hereby God doth gain to himself the greater glory in their deliverance, for remembering

bring them in their weak estate. Hereby the people of God are made the more thankful, both for their preservation *in*, and deliverance *from* their powerful adversaries. You see, here is a large field opened unto me, for the discoursing upon the Church's weaknels, which, whether it be more suitable to the *Text*, or to the *Times*, I leave to you to judge. But,

2. Consider the *cruelty* of their *opposition*: that is set forth and represented by the *fire that burned in the bush*. Afflictions, and especially persecuting ones, are in Scripture frequently set out by fire, as, *The fiery trial, the fire of affliction*. This doth not onely discover the *rage* and *cruelty* of men, but also the benefit and utility that comes to the Church by affliction; for the afflictions of the Church are not as *consuming*, but *trying fire*; as the fire in a furnace is to gold, it onely takes away the dross; not like the fire of bell, which hath *heat* without *light*, but the School of persecution hath *light* as well as *heat*; the School of affliction is the School of teaching, God teacheth his Saints excellent Lessons by the light of that fire. But I pass by that. I might now insist upon the third thing. —

3; Consider the *eminence* of their preservation, *It was not consumed*; the Church of God was *bot*, but not altogether and wholly *consumed*; let the fire be never so hot and spreading, the Church of God shall have a *being*; if the Church be less in one place, it will be greater in another; what it loses in one place, it gets in another; and God will have a Name among his people on earth:

A man may as well attempt to blow out the light of the Sun with a pair of bellows, or batter it with snow-balls, as to root the Church out of the world; for it is impossible to root Christ's Church out of the world. And if you take notice of particular Believers, *it is not consumed*, in a way of hurting and destroying them; and consider, their graces are not consumed, their welfare is not destroyed; this fire cannot burn them *up*, though it burn *upon* them: But as he will mitigate and allay the fire, so as that it shall not decrease their strength, so he will cleanse his people by the fire, so as that it shall burn up nothing but their dross, and what makes them offensive unto God, and what may make them hurtful one to another. But I pass by these things to the second general Part, *viz.*

2. *Moses* care to observe God's admonition, *That he would turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush was not burnt.* *Moses* was an excellent Naturalist, and yet here he was posed; he could see no reason in nature by all the learning of the *Egyptians*, how this thing should come to pass, that a flaming fire should be in a brittle *bush*, and yet the *bush* not consumed: And yet I do not conceive (as some Jesuitical Expositors upon the place do) that *Moses* did turn aside so much out of curiosity, as to *understand* what it was that God did intend by it, and would have him to learn by it. And doubtless when God's works are great, our observations should not be small; when his providence is eminently lifted up, we should not be cast down; when the hand of God is upon us,

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we must not shut our eyes. I am very far from being a Phanatique, and to give credit or be led by unscriptural revelations; but yet let me tell you, the times wherein we live are strange times, in regard of *strange sights* and *apparitions*, and I question if there have not been *some* as wonderful as *this* in our times, but I shall not now mention them; though it be a forfeiture of your modesty to give a reason for them, yet they do portend some strange things; the hand of God is not to be neglected, though it cannot be perfectly conceived; and it is the nature of a wicked man to have *Gods works far out of his sight*; be sure to lay them up in *your hearts*: And thus far you may take notice of them, To trust that God, that hath all the *Elementary Meteors* in his power, and at his command; and this *learn*, to tremble and dread before that God that hath you in his power, and can do with you and all other things as he pleases.

3. You have here considerable the Admonition of God, or the Monitory Precept God lays down to *Moses*, i. e. he forbids him to *draw nigher*, and then bids him to *pull off his shoes*: the reason of the former will be easily understood in the opening of the latter; I shall therefore in it briefly take notice of two things.

1. An Injunction, *Put off thy shoes*.

2. The Argument whereby he doth back this, *Because the place whereon he stood was holy ground*.

For the opening of the former, the Injunction, *Put off thy shoes*, I shall not give the divers glosses and divers Interpretations which men, with more

wit then weight, have endeavour'd to make of
 this Scripture; the plain meaning is this, which is
 given us by *Theodore*, *Put off thy shoes*, God's scope,
 and drift, and intent hereby was, to require of
Moses reverence, when he was to receive a message
 of very great concernment and importance about
 his Church; the design of God was in this to
 prepare him to obedience, therefore God requires
 that of him then, which servants were wont to
 do when they came to their Lord and Master, to
 shew their reverence to them, servants used to
 come bare-foot to their Master, to testify reve-
 rence to the commands of them on whom they
 waited: *Nudare pedes signum reverentie*. And the
 putting on the shoes is in Scripture, as well as among
 other Writers, held as a token of domination or
 masterly power. Hence some conceive, *John* spake
 of *Christ* as one that had his shoes on; and of him-
 self, as one that was unworthy to unty his shoes.
 And the Prophet *Isaiab*, by a sign of putting off
 his shoes, is commanded by God to put off his
 shoes from off his feet, and to walk naked and
 bare-foot; and he did so, *Isa.* 20. 2. which de-
 noreth the servility of the People, in token that
 God's people were to be in a low condition in
 captivity. So we read of *Mourners* in *Ezekiel*, chap.
 24. 17. that were of a low spirit, they are said to
 go without shoes, or unshod. And, my Brethren, on
 the other side, when God would show the free-
 dom of his people, and their deliverance from
 servitude, he is said to put shoes on their feet, *Ezech.*
 16. 10. And the reception of the *Prodigal* into his
 Fathers house, and the freedom and priviledge
 his

his Father intended him, (according to some learned men, intended by that expression in *Luk.* 15. 22.) is set forth by *putting on shoes* upon his feet. So that I take the meaning of this command to be so much; Shew by this thy reverence, thy humility, thy due submissiveness, thy subjection of spirit, together with thy servile readiness to do whatsoever I shall command thee. *Calvin* hath this Note upon the *Text*, If so excellent a servant of God as *Moses* had need to be quickened to reverence and obedience by such a ceremony, certainly we that are more backward to humility and obedience, should by our reverent behaviour, when we come into the presence of God, signify both the reverence of our souls by our outward expressions, and likewise quicken and fortify the inward graces of our souls by the outward gestures of the body, (especially in prayer) as kneeling, and lifting up the hands, uncovering of the head, and the like: for the presence of God is great, and it's the presence of the great God indeed; we that are not onely by the *Law of Creation* so infinitely below him, but also in regard of that illegal Law of sin, so much against him, should testify our *humility* before him, and *subjection* to him, when he calls for it by our reverence.

2. The Reason by which this is backt, *Because the place whereon Moses did stand was holy ground.* The meaning I take to be this, It is *holy* in regard of that visible and miraculous token, symbol, and sign of my presence, that is here discovered in this place; not because the place was (as I do not understand how any place is) of its own nature holy

holy, but God did testify, that that place being the place of his special presence, had thereby a holiness, there being now a sign given by God to *Moses*, that he was extraordinarily and miraculously there. And thus I have opened the second Branch, whereon this Injunction was backt, *This place was holy*; so it was then. Now I do not understand how I can discourse of this so profitably unto you, concerning the holiness of places, unless we take notice of the holiness of places now in the time of the Gospel, and consider, whether, and how, in these times, one place may be said to be holy or holier than another. And truly I am not put on this employment willingly, nor the handling of this subject; and if it were not extorted from me by something, I do not say that I have *seen*, but that I have *read*, that was *written* by men, and those none of the *meanest* neither, the *learnedest* of the *Papists*, I should not now have chosen to have entred upon this task, concerning the holiness of places, in opposition to *whom*, I have entred upon this discourse: I will give you two expressions, which one of the *devoutest*, and the other of the *learnedest* of them hath; the *learnedest* of them, accounted so at least (though, blessed be God, his weapons have not been formidable to the Church) is *Bel-larmin*, his words are these, *Templum consecrandum merito venerabile & divina virtute prae-ditum est*, The Temple consecrated is deservedly holy, and venerable in worship, and endowed with divine virtue and efficacy; the Temple ought to be looked upon as honorable and venerable. And

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for the other, *Durandas*, he tells us, *So great is the religion and holiness of Churches, that those things shou'd be, and may be forbidden to be done in them,* (he means perpetually, or else he saith nothing, for we grant as much) *which in other places may duly and lawfully be done.*

In the handling of this Question, *How we are to judge and conceive of the holiness of places, in the times of the Gospel?* I shall endeavour, first, to explain it, and then faithfully and truly endeavour to resolve and determine the same.

First then, for *Explanation*, I shall here endeavour to open these two things to you, first, what it is for a place to be *holy*, or wherein the nature of the *holiness* of places consists: secondly, what that is that is the *foundation* or *cause* of the *holiness* of places, and both these must in our discourse, and likewise apprehension be accurately distinguished.

1. What it is for a place to be *holy*, this is two ways to be considered; 1 generally, 2 more particularly.

1. More generally, The *holiness* of a place doth consist in the *separation* thereof, the setting it apart, the distinction and discrimination in the way of some excellent preheminance, or the exalting of it before and above all other places: Thus the notion of the holiness of places is taken in Scripture, *Exod. 30. 31, 37, 38.* you shall there read, that the Lord tells them in the 31 verse, concerning the *oyntment* that he prescribed, and likewise the *composition* of it for his service, *This shall be an holy anointing oyl unto me throughout your generations.*

nerations. Now see how God doth discover this to be holy, *On mans flesh it shall not be poured, neither shall you make any other like it after the composition of it.* Here was a discrimination, as well to the using of it as to the making and composition of it; as none was to make such an ointment as this was, so none was to use it in their ordinary and common employment: so that now the holiness thereof did consist in the distinction and discrimination of it from other uses, and likewise from all other ointments. And this is further expressed concerning the *holy Perfumes* in the 37 and 38 verses, there was to be a difference between *this* and other perfumes; and *this* was the holiness thereof. And so you shall find it not onely concerning *holy things*, but likewise concerning *holy persons*, *Levit. 20. 24, 25.* *I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people; you shall therefore put a difference between clean beasts, and unclean.* Mark ye, herein is the holiness of the people, that they were a *differented* and *sever'd* people. And hence it is you read in *Deuteronomy*, chap. 26. 18, 19. that God is there said to *avouch his people*, openly to discover himself to assert it that they are his people; their holiness was a discrimination, a separation from the rest of the people. And in *Dent. 7. 6.* and *14. 2.* you have there the very same things described and discovered to you. And now for this I shall desire you to take notice of comparing two places of Scripture, which discovers the holiness of places, in *Dent. 19. 2. 7.* *Thou shalt separate three Cities for thee in the midst of thy land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess*

possess it. And at the seventh verse, *Wherefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt separate three Cities for thee.* Now you shall have this again propounded to you in *Joshua, chap. 20. 7.* And they sanctified Kadesh in Galilee in Naphtali, and Sechem in mount Ephraim, and Kiriath-arba (which is Hebron) in the mountain of Judah. Mark the Scripture, that that was called Separation in *Deut. 9. 2 7.* is here called Sanctification; therefore the word in the Hebrew is, *And you shall sanctifie, or, make holy these places; that is, holy, by the separation of them unto that employment that I shall appoint:* Hence a thing is said to be unholy in Scripture when it is common, is not separated and set apart to holy employments and services, and from every thing that is of a civil concernment. And hence you read in *Act. 10. 14.* in the Vision that Peter had, God bids Peter kill and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. That that is unclean and unholy, in a way of legal unholiness, is said to be common, not set apart. *Heb. 10. 29.* you shall there read this notion clearly discovered to you in the New Testament, *Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall be thought worthy, who hath trodden under-foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing.* An unholy thing is a common thing. So that now what is sanctification in the former part of the verse, is called commonness and uncleanness in the latter part. But not to give you any more instances of this nature, the general nature of holiness is discrimination or Separation.

2. To answer it more particularly, this *setting apart, or discrimination, or Separation* of places for holy uses, must have these two properties.

1. A place that is holy, it must have such a separation from other places, as that it must be alienated from all uses but holy uses, it must not at all be employed to civil uses, for the employing of it unto civil uses must be looked upon as sinful and unlawful. Thus in the Scripture, when times, things, or persons are reputed as holy, they are to be exempted from common employment; the Sabbath day, a holy day, In it thou must not do any manner of work. The Vessels and Utensils of the Temple were holy, and therefore were not to be used to ordinary uses; and this, as some think, was the great sin of Belshazar, that he would offer to drink in the Vessels of the Temple. And so the garments of the Priests were holy, and not to be used by secular persons. And the Tabernacle and the Temple were holy, and not to be used in civil employments.

2. More particularly, concerning this holiness I desire to shew you what it is, by shewing you, it must be such a holiness and separation, as that the service done to God in those places must be accounted and looked upon as a better service, and more acceptable, then if so be it had been done else-where, more acceptable to God, and advantageous to our selves. Now, as places are said to be holy, in regard they are onely to be for holy services, so,

2. Holy in regard that holy services are onely to be done there with acceptation or advantage, at least

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least with so great acceptation. And therefore I desire you to take notice, that places in Scripture were said to be holy, which did sanctifie the Worship which was done in them, and sanctifie the Worshippers, and so the very places are part of worship; and so not onely places in which God was worshipped, but by which God was worshipped. And thus the Sabbath was sanctifi'd, and so the performance of Gods worship therein, made God's service more acceptable and sanctifi'd. And so the Altar, when it was holy, it made the gift the more holy and sanctifi'd, and so the more acceptable; the Altar sanctifi'd the gift, *Matth.* 23. 18, 19. And so the Incense was acceptable to God, as being put into such a Censer. And so the service done to God in such Garments was more acceptable, because done in them which God had instituted and appointed for Aaron and his sons to wear. And so I have opened the first thing in the explanation, and that is to shew you, wherein holiness consists, and how it is that places or things may be said to be holy; and I think I have sufficiently cleared the notion to you.

2. To shew, what the cause or the foundation of this holiness is; for this, my Brethren, I shall desire you also to take notice of it more generally, and then more particularly.

1. More generally, That the cause and the foundation of a place, or any other thing's holiness, it is its belonging to God, God's peculiar relation to it, and propriety in it, declared as he shall please: And therefore to be holy, and to be God's, are words of the like importance, or equivalent.

equivalent, its being God's, and his having a relation to it, is the foundation and cause of its holiness. And therefore if you look into *Exod.* 13. 2. you shall there find God commands, that *they should sanctifie to him all the first-born, as is mine*; there now is that which is the cause, and reason, and ground of its being sanctifi'd, or holy, it is God himself, God hath a propriety in it. And therefore I desire you to look into *Luk.* 2. 23. it will open this notion to you; there you shall see, that this command is again repeated, but yet in other words, and therefore he saith, *As it is written in the Law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord*; that which is said in one place to be sanctifi'd or separated, is here said to be holy; and therefore holy, because separated to God. *Levit.* 27. 30. *All the Tithes of the land is the Lord's, it is holy unto the Lord; it is holy, and therefore holy because it is the Lord's.* So that here is the general answer. This is the foundation, ground, and cause of its holiness, God's peculiar propriety in it, it is the Lord's.

2. More particularly, That the declared propriety that God hath in any place, or his relation to a place, or its belonging unto God, that is the foundation of its holiness. This belonging unto God, or Gods propriety in it, is declared two ways.

Its belonging unto God is declared,

1. From his Presence.
2. From his Precept.

1. By his Presence. Now the Presence of God, that was the foundation of the holiness of a place, was two-fold.

1. Extraordinary.

1. Extraordinary.

2. Ordinary.

1. The Extraordinary presence of God was by his miraculous Apparitions, and discovering himself by some miraculous token, vision, sign, or manifestation of his presence, as now here in this *burning, and not consumed bush*; here was a miraculous token of God's presence. We shall find in the fifth of *Joshua*, and the last verse, God commands *Joshua* to put off his shoes, *Lose thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. And Joshua did so.* And therefore, as I conceive, hence it is, the *Mountain* in which *Christ* was transfigured, is called, *The holy Mountain*, 2 Pet. 1. 18. *And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy Mount.* Why holy? Not as if it were holy at that time when the *Apostle* writ that *Epistle*, but it were manifest, there was an extraordinary manifestation and sign of Gods presence, and so long as this extraordinary manifestation of Gods presence continued, it was called holy. And this miraculous manifestation of the gloriousness of *Christ's* Godhead ceasing, the holiness of that place ceased also. And remember this place now, of Gods extraordinary miraculous manifestation of himself in the bush, was holy for that time, and no longer, wherein he did manifest himself; for otherwise, in the time of the Law, it were unholy to offer up sacrifice there.

2. As the presence of God was extraordinary, so it is ordinary, which is two-fold.

1. The presence of his standing residence in

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a place, by some visible or external Symbols; or else,

2. The presence of God is a spiritual presence, in the Religious services and performances of his people in the place of their meetings and assemblies. Now concerning the first of these.

1. The presence of God, by the more visible and lasting tokens of his presence, which was chiefly afforded in the time of the Levitical Pedagogues; to the Altar, Temple, Ark, and Mercy-seat, were symbols of God's presence among that people, by them God signifi'd his presence, he recorded his name there by these visible tokens of his presence; and therefore the Ark was said to be God's face: and when the Ark was lifted up, it was said, *Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered.* Hence they so much rejoiced when the Ark came into the City of David, because it was the sign of God's presence, and mourned when it was taken away captive. And God is said to *deliver his glory into captivity*; that is, the token of his glorious presence: and as long as this continued, God was looked upon as there present; and thither the people went to pray, and offer Sacrifice. And thus God more fixedly declared his durable relation to a place by these tokens, and while these continued in a place, he was looked upon to be there.

2. God's ordinary presence is considerable, in the Religious services of his People, and this I call the rather the more spiritual presence of God; this is that presence of God in the Ordinances, which we have, we hope, this day, and which

which Christ did promise, *Matth. 18. 20. Where-
ever two or three are met together in my name, there
am I present in the midst of them*; not in the midst
of the place, but of them, when they do perform
holy and institute worship. This spiritual pre-
sence of God is that that is afforded in the use of
those Ordinances of Praying, Hearing, and Ad-
ministration of Sacraments; his presence is there
to accept of these, and to bless them, and make
them operative, and to assist in these, and to en-
able both Minister and People to go through their
duty by his own power. Nor can God's presence
be ordinarily expected, but in this his own way.
Now then,

1. You must know, that as the presence of God
is the foundation of a places sanctity, and as it is
several, so you must know, God's propriety in, and
relation to a place is declared by his Precept; the
precept of God is Gods propriety in a place, as
well as his presence; thus it belongs to him by
command to make it holy, he may do what he
will, and choose out what places he will to be
holy. He to whom all things belong, surely may
have some places and things more proper to him-
self and peculiar; to the Temple of old, and the
Tabernacle, those places or Levitical and Cere-
monial worship, was separated and set apart by
God, by divine institution. Hence we have many
commands.

1. God commands, that such a House, and
such a Tabernacle shall be built, and this had
been unlawful to do had it not been com-
manded,

2. He directs the manner, and the mode, and that all things should exactly be done according to the pattern in the Mount. And

3. God doth command it should be in such a place, in the thrashing-floor of *Arumnab* the Jebusite, and that place that himself had chosen.

4. He commands that he will be served in these places peculiarly, rather then in any other place, he would not have these places changed for others. Herein this place typifi'd Christ, one that is onely able to make our services acceptable. Hence it is said, *Exod. 23. 17. Three times in the year all the males shall appear before the Lord.* And *Act. 27.* the *Eunuch* there went unto that place that God had commanded.

5. He doth command, that he would have these places revered, and no civil employments used there when the holy service was doing, and that after the service was done, at that very time the place should be onely for God.

6. And lastly, He annexed a promise unto that place, that he would accept of a duty done there rather then in any other place, even because it was done there; hence they prayed in the Temple rather then in their private houses, *Luk. 2. 27.* and when they could not be present, by reason of Gods providence, in the Temple, if they do but look to the City and the Temple, God accepted of their duty, *1 King. 8. 44, 48.* So that God did promise, that that place that he had instituted for his worship and service, that the service performed there should be more acceptable to him then else-where. This shews the reason and foundation

dation of a places holiness, the precept of God, and the promise and presence of God. And thus I have opened to you the second thing. Now having thus explained and opened the Question to you.

2. I come to resolve the Question, according to what I think in my conscience to be the truth of God; and this I shall do two ways.

1. By granting that which must not be denied.

2. By denying what must not be granted.

1. By granting what must not be denied; and here I grant willingly these four things.

1. That in the time of the Gospel, it is not onely lawful, but it is often very commendable and necessary, to design and dedicate places unto God. Now when I say, it is lawful to design them, and to dedicate them, I pray you bear me witness, I do not say it is lawful to consecrate them, or to sanctify them; but I say, it is lawful to design and dedicate them. Now for this take notice, that between 1 the designing and appointing of a place; 2 the dedication of a place; and 3 the consecrating of a place, there are these differences.

1. Concerning the designation of a place; Then is a place designed, when it is appointed to be made use of for the most convenient for such a service, as *Tuesday* and *Wednesday* may be appointed for Lecture-days, not consecrated. Now you must know, that this designation of a day may be altered, and so may a place; if such a place be designed, it is in our power to make use of it,

so as to leave off the use of it when we please,

2. As to **dedication** I mean so lawfully to dedicate a place, which is of our own right to dispose of; so to dedicate it, as not again to be able to revoke it, or call it back from such a use and purpose. It is lawful and commendable for a rich man, to dedicate so much ground or money, for building a House for a Free-School, or for the poor, and to give it away from our selves, and from our own right and power; and if so be that a man hath power or propriety over a place or thing, it is lawful for a man to alienate such a thing. And yet this you must know by the way, that this Dedication that now is in the time of the Gospel, doth very much differ from that dedication of Free-will-offering unto God in the time of the Law; for they were dedicated to God in the time of the Law immediately, that is, to his immediate Worship; it was part of God's Worship, it was a part of Religion to do that thing: whereas it is not now dedicated to the immediate worship of God, but it is dedicated immediately to such a Parish, or Minister, or Place, or company of People, that we have a good-will in giving; and so it more remotely redounds to God's glory, not immediately. For God hath not declared in his Word the same acceptance in the Gospel of things done in an immediate way, as he had in the time of the Law, of which acceptance now we have no such promise. And therefore it is observable, as one speaks concerning that Benefactor in the Gospel to the Jews, *He hath loved our Nation, and builded us a Synagogue,*

Synagogue, it is not said, *for God*; but, *for us*; This man out of love to us hath bestowed these things to God; which, though a giving our selves out of our own power, yet it doth differ from the *Free-will-offering* in the time of the Law. Ay, but now, Sirs, ye must know, that sanctification, or consecration, that is a great deal more; when we sanctifie a thing, or consecrate a thing, this thing that is so consecrated it is so holy, that there must nothing at all of unholiness, or of a civil or secular employment and concernment be done in it. Now we do not dedicate a thing, but there may be secular things in an ordinary and civil way done in them; and our services are now more acceptable for the place, nor the places less holy because of those civil employments. There is the first concession, that in the time of the Gospel there may be a designment and dedicating of places, and it is not onely lawful but commendable.

2. I grant, that in times of the Gospel, some places are to have religious services performed in them, rather then in other places; I mean, places of natural convenienty and fitness for the meeting of people together, whereby they may be free from disturbance, from the violence of enemies, and from tempestuous weather. As publick meetings, whereby we have the society of Gods people, their examples to stir us up to zeal, and their joynt help in prayer and holy performances, to go along with us, that we may joyn our forces together, and with a great force wrestle with God, and overcome him which is invincible.

And therefore, my brethren, I desire you to bear me witne's this day, that I plead for publick Ordinances, and for the purity of God's Ordinances to be administred in publick places rather then other places, so that I do here profess, that I do avowedly and openly declare my judgment, to be for publick meetings in publick places, and the purity of God's Ordinances, if they may be enjoyed without humane mixture, which may hurt and pollute them.

3. I grant, that in the time of holy service, we are not then to use secular employments at that time in those places, as eating, drinking, and talking, it being unsuitable to the work in hand; and howsoever they may be lawful at another time, yet unlawful then, because against the Apostles command, *Let all things be done in decency, and in order*; and that which is unsuitable to the commands of God, the taking his Name in vain. My brethren, I will go further with you, we are to abstain from all other religious services, when not in season; and therefore when the Minister is in preaching, we must not run into our places and kneel down, as some people do, and fall a praying. And I cannot but wonder, that they that do so much cry up uniformity and sanctity of places, that yet they should confute their judgment by their practice, that they should pray secretly when the whole Congregation is a praying vocally; and it may be the Congregation is singing a Psalm, or the Minister preaching, and then they go o their prayers; I pray where is the uniformity, decency, and order they so much stand for?

Lastly

Lastly, I grant, that after the performances of
 holy duties, in places wherein we meet for the
 worship and service of God, it is our duty to ab-
 stain, not onely from filthy and indecent actions
 of a natural or moral filchiness, unseemly, as
 looked upon by men against God's Law; but
 from all those civil, moral, lawful actions at
 other times, that may reflect any dishonor upon
 the work that hath been done, or upon the work
 that shall be done, or that may render the place
 unmeet for religious services afterwards: And this
 is that that one calls a Negative, or a Privative
 reverence, a reverence, or not doing something,
 not because the place is more holy, but for de-
 cency and order, considering the religious duties
 performed in that place. So that things subser-
 vient to Religion call for a Negative reverence,
 and are not so to be used, as that the Religious
 services which are there performed and trans-
 acted, should be made disgraceful and dishono-
 rable; as the Bread of the Sacrament, after the
 Sacrament is done, is not lawful to be cast unto
 unreasonable creatures, because it reflects dis-
 honor upon the religious service which we were
 before doing; so, dirty water is not to be put in-
 to the Communion Cup, not that the Cup is
 holy, but because it is a reflection of disgrace up-
 on that holy service wherein that Cup is made
 use of; and that Cup is not to be made use of to
 drunkenness. But in all this bear me witness
 that I say, all this is but a civil reverence, and
 so due to any place where there is any honorable
 Convention, as in the Parliament-house, or
 Presence-

Presence-Chamber, or the like. Having yielded this :

2. I must come now to deny what must not be granted ; and I likewise deny four things.

1. It is not now in the times of the Gospel in any mans power to set a part a place for religious duties, so as that it should be unlawful upon a due occasion to use it for civil employments, or that it should be alwayes unlawful to alienate to other uses, besides those uses that are divine, the bread and wine sanctified by Gods own institution by the Minister, after the publick use and administration of them in the ordinance, are not now holy, but they may be eaten in a civil use and way as our ordinary and common food. The Synagogues among the Jews were as holy as our Churches, they were for holy duties, as Prayer, Preaching, and the like, and dedicated to Gods worship, and yet you must know there were civil employments used in those places after the religious worship was done; and therefore in *Matth. 23. 34.* saith our Saviour, *some of them you shall scourge in your Synagogues.* Hence we use to keep Courts and Consistories in Churches amongst us, and some of them none of the best, and we use here among us in this City constantly in our Churches, (and I doubt not but it is lawful) for an Alderman in his Ward to meet about secular business. as to choose Common-Council-men, or the like. But where there hath been a dedication of a place to Gods worship, it is onely God that can make it so holy, as that it should be sinful to imploy it to other uses, and if the Governors of the Church upon due occasion and reason shall

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substitute other places more fit then the former for divine worship, then the *former* places may return to their former proper uses: but not to in things consecrated by God: If the Font, Table, or Pulpit wax old, they may be laid aside and looked upon as common things, and may be used for other employments: and suppose the surplice be a sacred garment in Gods worship (which yet I am perswaded none of you believe) doubtless it is not to be turned when it is old and past wearing, and the ashes put into a pot or some such like thing, and be buried under the Altar, but it may be used as other linnen may. And so the Communion utensils, as the Cup and the like, when they ere come to be old, they may be used for other imployments without fear of sin. And therefore it is an excellent speech of one, saith he, so to Consecrate moveable or immoveable goods, as that it should be a sin for the Church to use them in any secular imployments, it is an execrable and abominable Superstition: God hath not Consecrated any thing in the Gospel so, as that it is a *sin* to use it otherwise. It was a sin in them to make use of the Cups in the Temple in any secular way, but it is not so for us; the reason is, because those things were set apart by Gods own Institution: but there can be nothing so consecrated by men, as that it may *not be made use of* in secular things without sin.

2. A second thing I deny is, That no place now in the time of the Gospel hath such an holiness either from Institution or Use, as to sanctifie or make more acceptable or effectual the services therein performed: This is not in the time of the Gospel;
God

God is present at places of Religious performances not with respect unto the Place, but the Performance by him instituted and enjoined; and therefore he doth not say, Where two or three are met together I will be in the midst of that place; but, among them. God will be present in the place for the Duties sake; not among them for the Places sake, but the Duties sake in the place to bless the Ordinance for his own Institutions sake. Prayers and other duties in the Ceremonial Law were regarded for the places sake, but now we must abhor this piece of *Judaisme*: For a man to set a place a part by Consecration, that this place makes the duty any thing the more excellent or acceptable to God, this is to make the Traditions of men equal to the Institution of God. The Temple sanctified the duty, but not the Synagouge; and the Altar did sanctifie the gift, and the person, and service, because it was by Gods Institution, and so the Temple and Altar did add Efficacy and worth to the work; but for men to consecrate the Church, it is to make the Appointment of men equal with the Institution of God. Our Churches and Meeting-places are not holy (if they be holy at all) without relation to the duties performed, but our duties are holy without relation to the Church or the place. None but God can consecrate a place to be an effectual means of worship: the Jews worshipped God by the Temple, but we worship God in the Church; as the place doth afford a natural conveniency for our meeting together; the place then hath no influence at all upon our duties, and if any of you should think so, you err exceedingly: It is but onely a *Physical* Act of duty, or a

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natural *Adjunct* of duty, which is but at most helpful to the bodies conveniency.

3. The third thing I deny is this, That there is no place *so* holy as to exclude another place from being *as* holy in a way of proper sanctity and holiness, which we have been now opening. God now makes not one place properly more holy than another; there is not now properly any religious difference of places. We have not now the Precept of God to sanctifie and separate one place from another, to prefer one place before another; we have not now the miraculous presence of God, his appearing as at the bush. God hath not given *us* under the *Gospel* those symbols of his standing presence and residency, as by the *Ark*, and *Mercy-Seat*, and *Altar* of old he *gave* unto *his people*. And as for his Ordinances, if they make a place holy in regard of performance of duty to God there, and his spiritual presence in that place, then my Parlour, Chamber, or Closet are holy where I use to pray, and where God doth afford his assisting blessing and comforting presence: So that if you make the Spiritual presence of God to make a thing holy, in regard of Gods Spiritual presence going along with those services, then your *houses* are holy, and the *field* is holy where you *walk* when you *meditate*, and *praying* by the *River* side makes it holy; Humane consecration makes no place truly holy. If the Spiritual presence of Christ makes one place more holy then another, then the *Communion-Table* and *Font* are more holy then another place in the *Temple*. And so when Gods presence hath been enjoyed at the *Font*, that is more holy then the *Communion-Table*; and so when the presence

sence of God hath been enjoyed at the *Communion-Table* that is more holy then the *Font*, and so you must bring in *Judaism*. If the presence of God makes a thing holy, a *new Communion-Table* upon which the Sacrament was never administred, cannot be so holy as the *old Table*. Nay, by *this* the *months* of the *Communicants* are holy, having eaten the *Bread* and drunk the *Wine* which was dedicated to an holy use, and so it will be sinful for you to eat any other food. I conclude all with this, That the difference and holiness of religious places in the times of the Gospel, is not given but taken away by the Gospel. 1 Tim. 2.8. *I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.* You may pray, and that with as much acceptableness to God in *one* place as in *another*. John 4.21. Christ saith, *The time comes when you shall neither in this Mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father*: That is, Gods worship and service shall not be *confined* and *limited* to *those* places, as if others were not as good and holy as they. 1 Cor. 1.2. *To them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be Saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.* One place for the calling upon Christ is as good as another, and therefore, *Where two or three are gathered together, I will be in the midst of them.* And this is fore-told in *Zeph. 2. 11.* and in *Mal. 1. 11.* So that *this* is the *sum* of all, Gods Institution makes the Sabbath holy: And the Bread and the Wine set apart by Gods own Institution, after the *duty*, may be used in *secular* uses: But lastly, to name no more, no place is so sanctified by God, as that
after

after the ceasing of that presence of God, any holyness should belong unto it, as now when the signes of Gods presence ceased and was gone, the holiness of that place was gone, and then it was *lawful* for *Moses* to put on his shoes. And so when Gods presence ceased in the *Ark*, the *Altar*, and *Mercy-seat*, the places became no other then secular and civil. And now for us to go about (as the *Papists* do) a Pilgrimage to *Jerusalem*, as if that place had any more holiness then others, is a foolish and abominable thing: How many bloody Battels have been fought, to the disgrace as well as loss of Christianity, for the regaining of the Holy-land.

Nay, let me add, those places where the presence of God hath been formerly, when it hath been taken away, and those places have been used to Idolatry, they are the worie, and the more unholy; for this is turning the House of God into vanity.

The conclusion of all is this: whatever places are in holy duties, out of them they loose and leave all their holiness; and therefore I say it is boldnesse for us to go about to tie Gods presence to a place where God hath never tyed it, I cannot but wonder how it is possible for men of reason and learning to be so blind, as to hold that the Lords day (which was set apart by God for the Sabbath, as you may see in the fourth Commandment, and afterwards by Christ and his Apostles, which doth amount to no lesse then an Institution) is not holy after the Service or Sermon is ended, but then you may go to play at Foot-ball, and Cudgels, and Drinking, and what not, and yet that they should say, that the place of performing religious duties in, is so holy after religious performances,

ances, as that you cannot come into it without bowing the knee, and putting off the hat, and bowing to the Altar and Communion Table, and the like, this I cannot apprehend how it should be, and I wish any of you that are of this mind, would in private give me your reasons for it, why it should be so.

Now having explain'd the point, and given you a resolution of the question, in these particulars give me leave to wind up all with some Uses.

First, We infer the great difference that is between sanctity of places under the Old Testament, and sanctity and holiness of places under the New Testament: they under the Old Testament had the immediate presence of God, the standing Symbols, and visible signs of his presence, so long as those lasted: which was set apart by Gods special Commandment, and so they were holy though they were not employed in a way of worship, but you cannot say so now, our places for performance of holy duties have no such holiness, places now differ from places then.

Secondly, by way of Inference, I note the great goodness of God to give us such a sweet and gracious indulgent dispensation in the time of the Gospel under the New-Testament, as that he doth not tie us to ceremonies or places; he doth not bind us as he did the Jews, to go three times in the year to the furthermost part of the Nation to worship: No my brethren, no Land, no ground is now unholy, as famous old Dr. *Rainolds* said, every place is now a *Judea*, no Coast but is a *Judea*; every house is a *Jerusalem*, every Congregation is now a *Zion*: see here the goodness of God in indulging of us so far,

as to take any service done by us in a solemn and real manner, as if it had been done in those places which were formerly appointed for it to be done in.

Thirdly, I infer hence, there are several persons to be reprov'd:

1. We find hereby that all the holiness of reliques of Saints doth fall to the ground: and we see the folly of those that make Pilgrimages unto Saints and reliques as the Papists do: there was a time (say they) when such a Saints reliques were laid up in such a place, and these are more holy then other places; so that this you see falls to the ground in it self: I might tell you concerning their lying about their reliques, as one said, that there were as many reliques as would fill an hundred Carts: but supposing so, all that would not make the place the more holy.

2. Hence the superstition of those is to be reprov'd, which put holiness in places of burial, and make it more holy to be buried in one place then in another: it is more holy (say they) to be buried in the Church then in the Church-yard, and more holy under the communion Table then any other part of the Church.

3. This reproveth them which cannot pray any where but in the Temple, and they that use private prayer in Churches: If you have houses and rooms at home, what is the reason that if *Pauls*, or any other Church stand open you must run in thither, and drop down behind a Pillar to say your prayers?

4. This reproveth them that have reverence to one place more then another, as if they did deserve more holiness in one part then in another,

bowing to the Altar or Communion-Table, or the like.

5. It reproves those that have reverence for situation of these places, they must stand East and West, and why not North and South? all these things fall off like fig leaves; If what I have said be true, that there is no holiness in places, and this I have made known to you not onely as my judgement, but as my duty.

Now for Exhortation, I shall desire you to take notice of four things, and I have done, and shall leave you to God, and commit you to the word of his grace. If this be so, that there is no holiness in places, then first of all be the more encouraged to serve God in your families, in those places where God hath set you, where God is as well pleased with your service as in publick places; serve God upon your knees with devotion, humility and reverence. And therefore, though I am against Superstition, and Popish practises, and those wicked cursed traps of Innovations, that the men of the world have disturbed the Church of God with; yet I am against putting on your hats in prayer, and sitting in prayer. Those that are for holiness of places, do not, with *Abraham*, in every place they come build God an Altar. But let us in every closet and room build God an Altar; let no morning nor evening go without a prayer in thy family, pray often, and pray continually, let your houses be as so many Churches, as you read in *Rom. 16. 5.* *Likewise greet the Church that is in thy house:* and in the second verse of *Philemon's* Epistle, *To the Church that is in thy house;* there the houses of the Saints are called Churches. This will bring

bring a blessing upon your families : And if you be not willing to have that curse denounced against you, (in *Jer. 10. 25. Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not upon thy name*) then neglect not familie prayers ; be much in prayer, and pray with frequency and encouragement, because God binds you to no place. —

The second Exhortation is this, Labour to promote *personal holiness*, as well as *family devotion* : I am against local holiness : As one said (that I heard once when I was a youth) Happy are those garments that can carry away any of the dust of the Temple ; but they think not that many of their garments are unclean in wallowing in the mire of sin. But I say, do you labour to promote holiness in your lives, in your hearts and conversations. The *holy Ghost* saith, *Unless you be pure in heart, you shall not see God.* And therefore put away sin ; for if you regard iniquity, God will not hear your prayers : Is it not your ducking, or bowing, or cringing, never so much, or your going with your hat off through the Church, that will make God hear your prayers ; these will but dishonor you, because you live not accordingly.

3. Love the holiness of the living members, be not so much in love with the holiness of wood and timber, bricks and stones ; but wheresoever you see the Image of Christ, be in love with that soul ; where ever the presence of God shines, and where ever thou seest one that gives up himself to God in holy duties, do thou say, O ! my soul, delight to come into the company of these men. *The*

righteous is more excellent than his neighbour. If there be a heaven upon earth, I tell you, it is in the company of godly men. I remember, a famous man hath this expression, saith he, When I was in the company of the Saints and people of God, I was as a living coal; but when I was separated from them, and was among the wicked, swearers and drunkards, me-thought there was a spiritual coldness and frozenness went over my soul. Though the people of God are best company in heaven, yet they are very good company here on earth: And Christians should stir up one another, and be provoking one another to love and good works: and where ever you have grace, be sure to impart it. Endeavour to love the holiness of Saints, and be willing to impart your experiences to others, for this is your duty. Do not make a Monopoly of holiness, but carry company with you to heaven.

Lastly, to name no more, labour to preserve the holiness of God's *true* Institutions, those things which are of a divine consecration. What is *humane* consecration without *divine* institution? The *Sabbath-day* is of *divine* institution, labour to keep it holy; this is a *holy-day* indeed, and *this* labour to keep your families from profaning of; but for other *holy-days* and *holy things*, they are much alike for *holiness*: The Lords day is a holy day indeed, and for shame do not let your children gad abroad on this day. Truly, I do verily believe, that though here be a great company of people in the Congregation, yet they are but a handful in comparison of what are drinking in Ale-houses,

Ale-houses, and whoring, and walking in the fields, that one can hardly get home to their house for the crowd of people that are going thither. For shame let not *this* be told in *Gath*, nor published in *Askelon*. What ! shall we stand up for the holiness of *places*, and yet oppose the holiness of the *Lords day*, which God hath enjoined and instituted ? Oh ! that the *Magistrats* of *London* ; Oh ! that *Englands King* ; Oh ! that *Englands Parliament* would do something for the reformation of this ; to oppose wickedness and prophane-ness, which will otherwise bring upon *us* the judgment of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and make us guilty and worthy of a thousand punishments. And labour by prayer in your families to overcome that flood of prophane-ness, which you cannot by your strength prevent. And then for the Sacraments of Christ, *Baptism* and the *Lords Supper*, these are Ordinances of Gods appointment, they are holy, and therefore should not be given to those that are unholy ; and yet those who are so much for the holiness of places, do not care who come to the Sacrament ; if they have but a nose on their face, they shall come and partake of the Ordinances, let them be what they will ; this is to prefer mans institution before Gods institution. And then for the Lords Message and Word, that is a holy thing, and therefore love his Messengers: the Messengers of God delivering his Message with fear and reverence, you are to hear them with the same fear, and reverence, and resolution to be holy, as if Christ were present. And for the Word of God, it is not enough for you to have

have a choice Sentence written upon the walls of your Churches, but let God's Law be written in your hearts and consciences, and practised in your lives, that all the world may see you live as men dedicated to the true God, in all the duties of his ways and obedience. Many of these things might have been enlarged. What I have given you with the right-hand, I pray you, Christians, do not rake with the left, for if you do, you will make your selves guilty of a double sin.

1. Because you do not obey the truth you hear.
And 2. For putting a wrong construction upon it.

But I have better hopes of you, my Beloved Hearers, and hope, that the Lord will be better unto your souls than his *Ministers*, then his *Word*, or *any thing* else can be. God bless you and his Ordinances, and discover his mind and will at this time to you.

The End of the Tenth Sermon.

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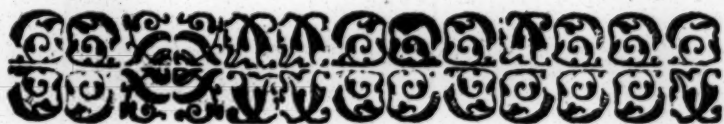
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S E R M O N X I.

Phil. IV. 1.

*Therefore my brethren, dearly beloved, and longed
for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord
my dearly beloved.*



MY Beloved, I do very well remember, that
upon the 24. of this instant moneth, in
1651. I was then under the sentence
of Banishment ; and that very day did
I preach my *farewell Sermon* to my peo-
ple from whom I was banished , because I would not
swear against my King, having sworn to maintain his
just power and honour, and greatnesse ; and now be-
hold a second trial : then , I could not forswear my
self, the God of Heaven keep me that I never may. I
am apt to think I could do any thing for this loving
Congregation, only I cannot sin. But since, beloved,
there is a sentence gone out against us, that we that can-
not *subscribe*, must not *subsist* ; this is the last day
that is prefix'd to us to preach : I shall now speak to
you (God assisting me) if my passion will give me leave,
just

just as if I would speak, if I were immediately to dye; therefore hearken my *Brethren*, *dearly beloved*, and *long'd for*, *my Joy and Crown*, *so stand fast in the Lord my dearly beloved*. *Paul* was now a prisoner at *Rome* for the Gospel of Christ; 'twas his second imprisonment: and he was not far from being offered up a sacrifice for the gospel he had preach'd. This gospel the *Philippians* had heard him preach: and the godly *Philippians* having heard of his imprisonment, they sent so far, from *Philippi* to *Rome*, to visit him, and to supply his wants. A gracious temper, which I hope the eternal God hath given the Saints in *London*, and for which, if for any thing, God hath a blessing in store for them. *Paul* is not so much concern'd in his own bands, as in the *Philippians* estate; *Epaphroditus* tells him that there were Heresies, and false doctrines got in amongst them, but yet the *Philippians* stood fast; and herein *Paul* rejoyces, writes this Epistle, bids them go on, stand fast, keep their ground, and to be sure not to give an inch, but to stand fast, knowing that at a long run *their labour should not be in vain in the Lord*.

I shall without any more ado enter upon the Text; in which you have two things considerable.

A most melting *Compellation*, and a most serious *Exhortation*.

1. A melting *Compellation*, my brethren, dearly beloved, &c.

2. A serious *Exhortation*, and in it 1. the *matter* of the duty, stand, and stand it out, and stand fast: 2. the *manner*. 1. *So*, stand so as you have stood, stand fast; 2. *in the Lord*, stand so, and stand in the Lord, in the Lords strength, and in the Lords cause: to stand in
your

your own strength would be the ready way to fall, and to stand in your own cause, for your own fancie, would be the ready way to expose your selves to all manner of Temptations: *Therefore my brethren, dearly beloved in the Lord, stand, and so stand fast in the Lord my dearly beloved.*

In the next place, by way of observation from the words; and if there be any wicked catchers here, let them know, that I shall speak no more then I shall draw from; & is the mind of my Text; I would not give occasion to be a greater sufferer then I am like to be. But for the words.

First, for the *melting Compellation*, my *Brethren*, my dearly beloved. *Paul* was an Apostle, and an high officer in the Church of God; and he writ unto the *Philippians*, to all the *Philippians*, to the poorest of them, and see how he bespeaks himself to them [*my Brethren*.] From hence take this observation, *That the highest officers in the Church of Christ, though they are indeed by office Rulers over them, yet by relation they are no more then brethren to the meanest Saint.* Here we have no such Rabbies to whom we must swear, because they say we must swear it. *Paul* calls them *Brethren*, and so writes to them, *Col. 1. 2.* and *James* a Scriptural officer, one of the highest Apostles Christ ever made, saith *Hearken my beloved brethren, Jam. 2. 5.* so *Peter*, an Apostle of Christ, wherefore the rather *Brethren*: and *John* the beloved Disciple, *Brethren, I write no new Commandement, &c. 1 Joh. 2. 7.* well then,

1. If this be so, that the highest officer in the church of Christ. such as Christ approves of, are but brethren

to the meanest Saint, then certainly *they are but brethren to their fellow officers* : if no more relation to the toe in the body, then no more to the eyes. If there be any of a light spirit would bear rule, that love to have the preheminance, I would desire them to read two Scriptures ; the first is *Luke 22. 26.* the second *Mat. 20. 26, 27.* doth Christ say, whosoever will be *chief among you, let him be one that will domineer over your Estates, over your persons, over your consciences,* doth not Christ say so ? no : but *whosoever will be chief among you let him be your minister, ---- let him be your servant. Even as the Son of man came not to be ministred unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many :* you have this also *Luke 22. 25. And he said unto them, the Kings of the gentiles exercise lordship over them, i. e. over their slaves, over their vassals : but ye shall not be so ; but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is chief as he that doth serve.* Sure if *Paul* be but a Brother to *Philip*, then he is no more to *Timothy*.

2. If the highest officers in the church of Christ be but brethren to the meanest Saint : then tis not for those brethren to *Lord it over their fellow Brethren,* Lord it *over Gods heritage* : remember, tis *Gods heritage*. I hope your consciences will bear me witness that I have laboured as much as in me lyes to be a *helper of your Ioy*, not to *Lord it over your faith*, 2 *Cor. 1. 24.* to presse or cause you to believe this or that, because I believe it ; if this be allowed, then may I turn *Papist* to morrow. Saith Christ to him that would have had him speak to his brother to divide the inheritance with him, *Man who made me a judge over you ?* *Luke*

12. 14. So say I, man who made the a tyrant, a lord over thy fellow Brethren. 1 *Pet.* 5. 3. *Neither as being Lords over Gods Heritage, &c,*

3. If the highest office in the Church of Christ, be but Brethren, and no more, then there should be no *discord between those Brethren.* Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for Brethren to dwell together in unity; and truly I may comfortably speak that, and tis one of the greatest comforts I have in the world. I hope we have lived together in love, blessed be God; let us not fall out, saith *Abraham* the Elder, to *Lot* his younger cousin, for we are Brethren. Beloved the discords between Pastor and People have made the best musick in the ears of the Jesuits.

4. Are Pastors, nay, the highest officers that Jesus Christ hath, and doth own in his Church, but Brethren? Oh! then let those Brethren if they will appear before the bar of their Father in Heaven with comfort, *take care of offending the souls of their Brethren;* for at the hand of every brother, God will require the Soul of his brother. *Ez.* 33. 6. *His blood will I require at the watchmans hand.* We that are called by some the *dogs of the flock,* what shall we prove *dumb dogs?* what a comfort will it be to my dying brethren this day, if they can but say, Lord we are clear from the blood of our Brethren? The officers of Christ should never behave themselves so, that they should give their people occasion to say, we are Brethren to Dragons. But, *Ier.* 9. 4. *Take ye heed every one of his neighbour &c.* I would commend one Scripture to all my Brethren in the ministry. 1 *Cor.* 8. 13. A Scripture that I would have writ in letters of gold on

the lintel posts of a'l Ministers doors. *Wherefore if meat make my Brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world stands, least I make my brother to offend.* Rather then to endanger his Soul, i'le away with all these toys and gew-gaws.

2. From the tearms of dearest affection, *dearly beloved, longed for &c.* Take this observation, that, *it becomes the highest Ministers, much more the lowest, to bear a most tender, vehement, ardent, strong, melting affection, towards that flock or people that God hath committed to their charge.* Thus Paul to the *Philippians* in the text, *my Brethren, dearly beloved &c.* You shall find Paul in all his Epistles, in a thawing frame to his people, melting in love unto them: the *Corinthians* were so in his heart, not only to live with them, but if God called him to dy for them, so abundantly did he love them. *2 Cor. 12. 15.* That he would *very gladly spend and be spent for them*, carried them in his heart, and earnestly longed after them *all.* As for the *Thessalonians*, *1 Thes. 2. 8.* He, as a nurse, tendreth and nourisheth them as children: and is so affectionately desirous of them, that he is willing *to impart to them not only the Gospel, but his own Soul*, because they were dear to him. Then

1. Is this so, ought the Pastor so to love their people? give me leave to bespeak you in the words of *Job*, (in respect of those hundreds of Ministers, that are to be plucked from their people:) *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, oh ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me. Job. 19. 21.* What will nothing serve but plucking out our very eyes? our very heart, (being so much the objects of of the peoples love.)

love.) How sad is it for the Father to be pluc't from the child, the shepheard from the flock, the nurse from the child: this is a Lamentation, and ought to be for a Lamentation: that there must be a parting between *David* and *Jonathan*, who loved one another as their own Souls, this cuts them unto their very heart. And this I may say with respect to my self, I blesse God, I cannot say as she of her husband, *a bloody husband hast thou bin unto me: but a loving congregation* have you been unto me. I know none of you have desired my destruction, nor to taint my name; never did I hear three in this Congregation, speak of pressing any thing against me, that was contrary to my conscience: nor can I say, that there are four in this Parish that did ever deny to pay me my *legal due*, blessed be God for such a people, you have not encroached upon my conscience, as I hope I have not upon yours. Pastors must love their people, ~~doe not blame them, if their hearts be almost broken: when they are to part with such a people.~~

2. Must the Pastor love his people? then, *the people must love their Pastor*. 'Tis true, it lyes in the power of man to seperate the Pastor and People, but not to seperate their hearts; I hope there will never be a separation of love, but that will still continue: if we do not see one another, yet we may love one another, and pray for one another; I hope a husband doth not cease from loving his wife because she is *absent* from him. But oh! for my Brethren, hundreds of them think that you are undone, but you are not undone, though you cannot see as far as other men, you may live in love, and keep your consciences quiet.

3. Must Pastors love their People? then you see from

from hence, *what should be the grand object of the Pastors affection. i. e. the people*, not what the people have, this is great inquirie, what is the benefice worth? whats the preferment? do they pay well &c. Whereas we should not seek so much the *fleece* as the flock, we should not take over-sight of a congregation for *love of their pay*, but of their *soules*; not, tis an excellent good living, as one said I have heard of, let me have their tythes, and let their soules go to the Devil; but as the Apostle, *I seek not yours, but you*, 2 Cor. 12. 14. And I hope there be many hundreds can say, it hath been the peoples soules they have more loved and affected, then any thing what the people had.

4. Once more: we must love them, and love them tenderly; why, and yet leave them? yes my beloved, we are so to love our people as to venter any thing for them, but our own damnation. I come not here to throw fire-brands, I blesse God I have a most tender affection for all my Brethren in the Ministry, and though I am not satisfied my self, yet I condemn no man, I beleive there be many of them do as conscientiously subscribe, as deny to subscribe: I protest in the fear of God *I cannot subscribe*, perhaps it is because I have not that light as others have, for he *that doubts* saith the Apostle *is damned*: my beloved, I hope you would not have us sin against God, and our consciences: It is not my *living* that I desire, but my *office* to serve my Lord and Master, but if we should to keep communion with you loose our communion with God, this is the ready way to have all our labour and pains lost, but as *David* said (and oh, that I could speak it with as good hopes as *David*,) *Zadock, carry back*

back the Ark of God, if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his habitation, but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee, behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him. 2 Sam. 15. 24. Brethren, I could do very much for the love I bear to you, but I dare not sin? I know they will tell you, this is pride and peevishnesse in us, and that we have preached against it, and are tender of our reputation, and we would fain all be Bishops, and forty things more: but the Lord be witnesse between them & us in this. Beloved, I prefer my wife and children before a blast of ayre of peoples talk, I am very sensible what it is to be reduced to a morsel of bread: let the God of Heaven and earth do what he will with me, if I could have subscribed with a good conscience, I would, I would do any thing to keep my self in the work of God, but to sin against my God, I dare not do it.

3. *My joy and Crown*, therefore my dearly beloved and longed for, my *joy and Crown*, my present joy and future crown: my joy which I value more then a crown, my principle joy. Hence observe this doctrine, that, *The fixed standing flourishing growth of Saints in gospel practise, and gospel obedience, is or ought to be matter of transcendent joy to their Pastors.* It was so to the Apostle Paul; Paul heard how they stood: though there was a plague amongst them, yet they were not infected; and though he was in the goal ready to be beheaded, yet this was his joy and crown, that his people did stand, and I hope my Brethren it will be our joy and crown to hear of your standing and growth in gospel knowledg, and gospel profession. And .

1. If this be so, as *John* said, *I* rejoyced greatly that *I* found of thy children walking in the truth : it should be the prayers and endeavours of all Pastors really to love the soules of their people, and to pray for them : that when they cannot look after the soules of their children, yet that good nurses may be looked out for them : what a joy was it that *Moses* mother was made his nurse, and who can tell, it may be thought not out of any merit of ours, yet of their own clemency our governours may give us to be nurses over our own children : but if *I* cannot nurse my child my self, *I* will wish it well, and as good a nurse as *I* can : far be it, that those that are to succeed should not prosper : Lord, it shall be the prayers of thy servant, that those that are to succeed may have a double and treble portion of thy spirit, that he may be both painful and faithful &c.

2. If the peoples growth in grace and knowledge be matter of joy to a faithful Pastor ? then what do you think of those that *hinder their thriving*. I shall give you two Scriptures, *John* 12. 19. *The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, (they durst not speak publicly, but who was it against ? why, it was against Christ) perceive ye how ye prevail nothing, behold the world is gon after him.* But we will order him for that, we will be sure to lessen his congregation ; if we cannot do that, we will shut the doors against him. see *Mat.* 23. 13. *Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites, for ye shut up the kingdome of Heaven against men : what ! shut up the kingdome of Heaven against men ? what the Pharisees ! that pretended they had the keys of Heaven, and to be the guides*

guides ? I, that is it, because there is not room enough in heaven for us and them too ? no faith Christ, there is no such matter, *For ye neither go in your selves, neither suffer ye them that are entring to go in.* I dare not tell you at this time what it is to *shut up the kingdome of Heaven against men*: you may better imagine it then I can speak it, but this did the Pharisees, *they would not go in themselves, nor suffer them that were entring to go in.* I remember when I was a Child we had such a Minister, that would one Lords-day preach up holiness, and the next Lords-day would preach against the practice of holiness.

And now my Brethren, I am come in the next place to speak to the last part, *stand fast* ; and because I see a Hurricane a comming, *keep your ground, stand fast,* and live in the Lord here, that you may live with him hereafter.

Where-



Phil. 4. 1.

*Therefore , my brethren , dearly beloved and
longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in
the Lord, my dearly beloved.*

From this Scripture you have had these three Doctrines. 1. That the highest Offices of the Church of Christ, though they are Rulers of them, yet they are but Brethren to the meanest Saint. 2. That it becomes a true Scriptural Minister of Christ, to have a most vehement, ardent, strong, melting, tender affection to that flock or people, which the providence of God hath committed to his charge. 3. That the fixed, standing, flourishing, and thriving of that flock in the profession and practice of Gospel-knowledge and obedience, is matter of transcendent joy and triumph to such a godly Pastour. The 4th. which is that I would now prosecute, is this, That it is the grand and indispensable duty of all sincere Saints, in the most black and shaking seasons, to stand fast, fixed, and stedfast in the Lord.

This is the grand thing S. Paul had to say to his Philippians, when he was ready to have his head cut off, for so it was, he was beheaded for the testimony of Jesus : this is all he had to say when in Jayle, and in bonds, and that under Heathen Romans ; you are now my Joy, you are now my Crown, oh ! doe but stand, and my Joy, which is but two notes above Gamut, will
get

get to *Ela* : oh ! doe but stand, and my Crown's studded with Diamonds : we live if you stand, though we die when you stand. *It is the great and indispensable duty, &c.* Whether these are *black and shaking seasons*, I have nothing to say, but I am wholly now upon your *duty*, beloved, and for Gods sake, let the words of a *Civilly dying Minister* prevail with you. There is a kind of a maxim among some, that in case a person die seemingly, and revive again, that the last words that was heard of that person when in a rational temper, are the onely things that that person will remember when brought to life again. It is most probable beloved, what ever others may think, but in my opinion, (God may work wonders) neither you nor I shall ever see the faces of, or have a word more to speak to one another till the day of Judgement. Therefore I beseech you hear me, as those that would and may live with me to eternity : mark your duty, I have spoken something concerning the *Pastours duty* in the morning, now for the *Peoples*. *It is the indispensable duty of all sincere Saints to stand fast, &c.* I confesse, I have a love for the whole Auditory, I have a messe for them, but my *Benjamin's* messe is for those I once called my own people : you are my *Benjamins*, I wish I had a greater then a fifth for you. This proposition I shall

1. *Prove*, and then
2. *Improve*.

In the worst of times, in the most shaking seasons, and if I doe not greatly mistake, there is an hour of temptation threatned by God, now beginning to be
in-

inflicted : if ever you would stand, stand now ; and for your comfort, let me but hint, that a Christian may stand comfortably, when he falls sadly ; that is, he may stand by God, when he falls by Man : I knew that a great many yeares ago.

First then, 'tis your duty to stand. There be Scriptures more then enough to prove this to be your duty. Col. 4. 12. *Stand perfect and compleat in all the will of God.* Phil. 1. 27. *Onely let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you (alafs poor Paul, thou come and see them, thou wast beheaded before thou could'st come and see them, but) or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together (not to pluck out one anothers throats, no more of that : but striving together, not against one another, but) for the faith of the Gospel.* So 1 Cor. 15. 58. *Therefore my Brethren, be stedfast, unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* 'Tis our duty to stand, but

Secondly, *wherein must we stand stedfast?* I have no new Doctrine to preach now, I shall but mind you of what I have formerly spoken when you would not believe. I confesse I doe not begin to be of a new judgement now ; and should I be continued in the Ministry, (a mercy I can hardly hope for) I should be of the same judgement, and Preach this Docrine, *Stand fast.*

God will certainly bring the people of God in *England* to his own tearms, or else far them well for ever. What's that we should be stedfast in ? I would advise to a stedfastnesse

- i. *Of Judgement.*
2. *To a stedfastnesse of Resolution.*
3. *To a stedfastnesse of Faith.*
4. *To a stedfastnesse of Conscience.*

So stand fast in the Lord in your *Judgement*, in your *Resolution*, in your *Faith*, in your *Conscience*.

1. I would advise to a *stedfastnesse of Judgement*. Strange Doctrines are the greatest fetters that doe assault a sound Judgement ; they are like waves, if they doe *split*, they will *shake* the Ship to purpose : therefore your way is, to cast anchor well, to stand firm on the rock of truth, I had almost said all in a word, *Protestant truth* : though the market may rise somewhat high, yet stand firmly there : while strange Doctrines like so many impetuous waves are beating upon you, break themselves in pieces they may, but if you stand, can never hurt you. I am not now to begin to warn you against *Papery*, not that I have the least reflection on any thing in the world, but on the *Scriptures*. I am apt to think, the *wound of the Beast must be healed*, however, doe not you *spread a plaister* for the *Beast* to heal his wound : *Be no more Children tossed to and fro, carried about with every wind of Doctrine*, with every wind or windy Doctrine, *by the slight of men, and cunning craftinesse*, that can cog the Die, notable Gamesters there are in the world, but you must stand steady in Judgement, you must be firm to your principles : I would have you *Stars*, not *Meteors*, for *Meteors* are carried about with every blast of wind : I hope better things of you, I shall pray God would make you stedfast in Judgement. First be sure to get good principles, and Secondly be sure to stand in those good prin-

principles that you have got. And though *I* cannot say but some *Tares* are sown among this Parish, yet I blesse the Lord, for the generality, *I* hope *I* may say, *I* have an *Orthodox Ministry*,

2. 'Tis not enough to stand in Judgement, but we must be *stedfast* to our *Resolutions*. 1 Cor. 15. 58. *Be stedfast, unmoveable*, such as stand firm on some basis and foundation, that doth not totter and stagger: if they find you *staggering*, to be sure the next moment they look upon you as *falling*. Be as they say of one or both of the *Poles* of the Heavens, though all the world turns, the *Poles* are immoveable. If *I* mistake not, you may see a great turn in the world, and behold at this day, the greatest turn that ever was in *England*; but yet you must not move, you must not stir, be true to your *Resolutions*, be just to your first love, go on in the Lords work, let nothing take you off. If *I* have preached any false Doctrine among you, witnesse against me at the day of Judgement; but if the things *I* have preached be true, stand to the truths: if you doe not witnesse against my Doctrine, (mine 'tis not) but rather witnesse for it, remember, if you leave it, that very Doctrine will witnesse against you at the day of Judgement. Oh! that excellent Heroe, Queen *Hester*, thus and thus *I* will doe, and if *I* perish *I* perish. You cannot imagine against how many thousand temptations a stedfast resolution will guard you.

3. There's a *stedfastnesse* of *Faith* too: when we so believe, as that we doe not waver, or doe not hesitate. Will you give me leave to propose to you (my dear friends, though my Congregation *I* cannot call you) that question which our Saviour did unto the Jews,
(whom

(whom he hated, though *I* love you) *The Baptisme of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?* The doctrines you have heard, have they been from Heaven, or from men? Answer me, if from men, abhor them; man is a false creature, man would make merchandize of your faith and souls; but if from Heaven, why then should you not believe them? I bless the Lord, my conscience bears me witnesse, I never did so far propose a doctrine to you *I* would have you believe without Scripture. If the doctrines have been from God believe them, if not, abhor them, and any of those that shall dare to bring a doctrine, but dare not bring the authority of the Scripture to warrant them. You may not be like those in *Jam. 1. 6. that wavereth like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed.* The most godly man may stumble in his way, *i. e.* tread awry, but a wavering minded man is never settled concerning his way. Blessed be God *I* am not now (on this day that looks as like my dying day as can be in the world) to begin to fix upon a Religion, to fix upon my way, *I* know my way, if God will but keep my steps, and guide me in that way. If God be God (*I* appeal to your consciences) worship him; if *Baal* be God, worship him: do not stand disputing and doubting; do not say, shall *I*? shall *I*? if the wayes you have found be the wayes of God, follow them; God hath but one way to heaven, there is but one truth; if *Baal* be God follow *Baal*, do not stand wavering: do not consult with flesh and bloud; tis an infinite mercie that God will give any of us to leave Relations, Estates, Congregations, any thing for Christ: 'tis an infinite mercie we do not split upon a rock. Be sure to be either for God or *Baal*: a godly man many times halts in his way, but never halts between two opinions.

* *

4. Sred-

4. *Stedfastnesse of Conscience.* Indeed the genius of my ministry hath lyen this way : and here I could easily launch out , but I must be short. I would speak a word in season to those that are weak , it becomes you to be stedfast in conscience ; then have a God decreeing, a Christ redeeming, a spirit quickning , a gospel promising, a heaven prepared , a God infinitely more ready to save him , then he can possibly be desirous to be saved by him. Be stedfast in conscience against the guilt , the filth of sin, against the temptations of Satan, &c. Let us draw neer, with full assurance of faith: you can never believe Gods love so much , as Gods love doth engage you to believe, &c. I might adde,

5. You must be stedfast in conversation : tis not the *Running well* , but the *Running out* ; tis not the *fighting* but the *conquering* that gives you *title* to the *Reward* : for you to give a great deal of milk , and to throw it down all at length with your foot , may argue you to have a good dug, but a bad foot. Never give those beasts of *Babylon* occasion to say , that a man may be a child of God in the morning, and a child of the Devil at night ; that we contradict that Doctrine by our conversation, that we assert in our profession.

But why must we be stedfast ?

Alas, why ? would you have me marshal up all the Reasons ? I bid me count the starres, or number the sands on the sea shore. There is not an attribute in God, not a precept, promise, or threatening in the word , not an ordinance, not a providence ; there is nothing in God, or in the Devil, or in sinners , or our selves , but all would give a contribution of arguments to prove the Saints should be stedfast. I must but hint at a few things.

First ;

First; I would argue *from Jesus Christ*. Believers, you *love Christ*, and therefore you love the *honour of Christ*; now the honour of Christ is highly engag'd in your stedfastnesse. We never cast a deeper blot on the honour of Christ, then when we grow unstedfast: I need not tell you so, the Jesuites, those meek Papists will tell you so, those that delight in nothing more then in the milk of the Virgin *Mary*, and in the blood of Saints: they have enough if you be unsteady.

1. You dishonour Christ in his *sufferings*: pray tell me Believers, why did Christ sweat blood? why did he dye? why did he undergoe what the wrath of Devils could inflict, but for this end, to make you steadie, to give you the conquest of all spiritual Enemies, and to make you stand in that conquest triumphing. Thus I remember as *Josuah*, Jos. 10. 24. *Come, put your feet upon the necks of these Kings, and they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them*. So, Christ hath dy'd, that you might live, that you might stand; and what dishonour to the eternal Saviour of the world, to a *dying Saviour*, to see a *flying Christian*. Twas never heard of, that souldiers should flye before a conquered enemy, whose legs were cut off, whose armes were broken; whose swords taken from them. 2. Tis a dishonour to the *spirit of Christ*: The same spirit that was with Christ in all his Agonies, this very spirit he hath given to believers that he might bring them through with some victory; therefore, when we stand not, 'tis a high dishonour to Christ's spirit. 3. Tis a dishonour to *Christ's truth*: oh! let but a Saint fall, & what a dishonour doth it bring to the Truth. I have but thought of some late experiments of poor Mini-

sters that I have heard of, carried about in triumph, look heres the man, heres the man that hath done this, that, and t'other thing; & now, look here's his--- I cannot excuse *Noah* from his *drunkenness*, yet methinks 'tis the part of a *Cham* to *shew his father's nakedness*. I remember that one hath told me, ('tis a great Truth) That *Religion never suffers greater wounds, then by the hands of her professed friends*; Oh! what advantage have the wicked *Papists* taken against us by the falls of English *Professors*, both in principles and practice. 4. 'Tis a very great dishonour to *Christ's all-sufficiency*. Tell me man, is thy *Christ* able to protect thee against all evil? and is he able to supply thee with all good? or is he not? if he be not, then deny him, and whatever thou hast said concerning him; if he be, then stand close to him, *in the mount he will be seen*.

2ly. I would argue from *Saints*; the infinite advantage that at a long run (I do not say presently) will redound to those that are steadie in judgement, in resolution, in faith, in conscience, in practice, so far as all these are conformable to the word of God, and no further. The greatest advantage appears upon these four grounds.

1. Whatever thou thinkest, a steadie condition is the safest condition.

2. The fullest condition.

3. The strongest condition.

4. The freest condition.

Oh! that I could beat this into my heart, as well as 'tis in my head. The *safest* condition in the midst of *dangers*; the *fullest* condition in the midst of *wants*; the *strongest* condition in the midst of *assaults*, and the *freest*

freest condition in the midst of *str-a-ights*. I profess in the presence of God, I have felt these things, and know them to be true many yeares ago.

1. It is the *safest* condition: never doe the Saints take hurt, but by declining, moving from their center: while at their center the Devil cannot touch them, departing thence, is like the poor Bird from her nest, every one hath a sling at them. Remember this, let but a man once leave his Scripturall station, and what temptation is he able to stand against: it is just like a man thrown down from the top of an house, no stopping till he come to the bottom. 1 Joh. 5. 18. *He that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and the wicked one toucheth him not.*

2. It is the *fullst* condition. Oh! my Brethren, Saints living stedfastly on their foundation, are continually supplied by God, as the fountain doth continually issue out it self into the streams. I know 'tis best living upon a single God, How many thousands be there yet living in *England*, that can tell you, they never enjoyed *more of God*, then when they enjoyed *least of the Creature*. Some have professed to me, their *prison* was to them as a *palace*, that were troubled more with these things then ever you were, and the God of heaven grant you never may.

3. 'Tis the *strongest* condition. A man that stands stedfast, is like a man on a Rock, the waters come, they may dash themselves in pieces, but never shall be able to dash him in pieces, he is fixed on a Rock, and therefore stands. A man that stands steady to his Scripturall principles, is like *Sampson* with his *Locks* about him, let all the *Philistines* come, what cares he, he is able to conquer them all. * * 3

4. 'Tis

4. 'Tis the *freest* condition. A man that deserts his principles, is a slave to every condition, afraid of every humour, of every Aspine leaf in the world, thinks all those are *informers* that converse with him, is afraid of some *promooter* or other. But he that stands fast, where the spirit of God is, there is liberty and freedome: such a man in chains, as *Paul* at *Rome*, is in a far freer condition then others not in that restraint. Well then, 'tis rationall that you stand, but it may be your lusts and interest can hardly swallow these things: if we stand we shall not fall; nay, if you doe not stand, be sure you shall fall at last. The next thing I would doe, is to apply this truth.

Is it the most important duty of all sincere professors, in the most shaking seasons, to stand stedfast in the Lord. then

First, by way of *Lamentation*, and that

1. *Over our own souls.*

2. *Over hundreds of Congregations.*

Lord, must, doe we say hundreds, nay thousands of Congregations, that are this day, though they doe not accompany us in person, yet mingling tears with us, and especially as I hear, on the *West* of *England*.

1. *Over our own hearts.* We must stand; thats our duty: oh! how should it cause us to lie low, by reason of the instability of our hearts, and their cursed declining from the true foundation every day. Alas Beloved, this is that that God complains of, *They are a generation whose spirit is not stedfast with God*; and therefore we have very much reason to complain of it: oh! that this sin might be forgiven: oh! what an unsettled people have we been, to day we have
been

been apt to cry *Hosanna, Hosanna to the Son of David* ; to morrow our note is changed, *crucifie him, crucifie him, give us Barabbas* : to day the Lord is God, to morrow *Baal* ; any thing is God, provided we may keep our Estates. Oh Lord ! what wilt thou doe with such a people as this ? certainly it is a lamentation, and ought to be a lamentation. Believe it Beloved, *I* can now count seven years, if not something more, wherein *I* have most clearly expected the dayes *I* now see : no way, but the severest wayes to be taken with such a false people as we have been. Judge in your own thoughts, whether we have been true to God or Man, to Saints or Sinners, to the Churches of God at home, or abroad : whether or no this be not matter of lamentation.

2. With respect to our *Congregations*. ('tis not against the Law yet to call them *our* Congregations) This *I* confesse, *I* can rather weep then speak to ; *I* cannot speak, my heart is too big for my head here. Lord, is it the duty of people, of Saints, to stand, to be steadfast ? how then should we moune over those poor souls, that because their *pillars* are taken away, must needs for ought we know *fall*, unlesse thou dost support them ? What, Lord, dost thou complain of a flock of Sheep that are scattered ? oh ! ther's no wonder in it, their Shepherd is gone. Doe you look on it as a strange thing, to see a poor Ship to be tossed here and there in the Sea, when their Pilot is destroyed ? why Mother, is it a strange thing for your Children to fall, and knock their Armes, Legs, their brains out ? why, their Mother is taken from them : oh poor people ; good God provide for this Congregation, *I*, and for this City,

City, that (let defacing, abominable wretches say what they will) is certainly one of the best Cities God hath in the world; and therefore they hate it so desperately because God loves it, and because they hate that God that loves it. *I* blesse God, *I* can speak of my own people, they are not a mad pestiferous people, for the most of them. How many thousand have their hearts at their mouths now at this time before God in *England*: alas, alas, that we should ever have our Sees carried away from us: but what think you, when poor people shall be exposed to greater temptations, to an Ulcer in the very Kidneys, to a Plague in the very Heart, or Head: you now fear it, but when you feel it, what then?

2. By way of exhortation, beloved, I remember good *Jacob*, when he was come into *Egypt*, and ready to dy, calls his children together, and before he dyes *blesseth* his *children*: I cannot say you are my *children*, but I can truly say in the strength of God, you are dearer to me then the children of my own bowels. I remember what poor *Esau* said, *hast thou but one blessing my Father, bless me, even me also, oh my Father*: Oh! beloved, I have a few *blessing* for you, I have a few words of *Exhortation* for you: and for Gods sake take them as if they dropt from my lips when I sing, 'tis very probable we shall never meet more while the day of judgement, what ever others think, *I* am utterly against all irregular wayes: I have, (*I* blesse the Lord) never had a hand in any change of government in all my life: *I* am for prayers, tears, quietness, submission, and meekness, and let God do his work, and that will be best done when he doth it.

There-

Therefore be exhorted to stand fast in the Lord : my own people, hear me now, though you should never hear me more, be exhorted to stand fast in the Lord : you are not a schismatical, heretical people, *I* do not know the least person among you inclining to *popery* : Therefore be exhorted, as ye have been a people that have waited upon the ordinances of God, that have not persecuted your poor Ministers : that have made it your design and business to live lovingly, quietly, and as it becomes christians, (*I* am confident a Minister may live as comfortably among you, as among any people in *England*.) So be ye stedfast, unmoveable, alwaies abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. Here *I* had prepared, *I* confess, several arguments to have moved you to this stedfastness.

1. *I* could have told you, that with drawing of any one of you back, you will meet with great temptations which will very much unfit you for Heaven. *If any man or woman, draw back my soul* (saith God) *shall have no pleasure in him* : *I* could have urged you with examples from the *Heathens* : *Alexander* being in *India*, bid them tell him the greatest *rarity* in their country : Sir, go tell them say they, when you come to *Greece*, there are many here that cannot be forced by the prowess of *Alexander* to change their minds : *I* know there are some here, that cannot be easily persuaded to change their religion. Saith *Lactantius*, *our very women torment their tormentors* : *I* would never desire a more able disputant, then a woman against a Monck.

2. *I* could tell you of those enjoyments God hath put
on

on you, our miseries have been great, but our mercies have been greater : I could tell you of six troubles, and of seven, of six wherein God hath stood by, and of seven wherein he hath not forsaken : and the truth is, he cannot forsake his people, he may forsake them as for *comfort*, he will never forsake them as for *support* : let him lay on a burden, he will be sure to strengthen the back.

3. I hope tis not dangerous if I tell you, you are engaged to God : there are *vowes* upon you, Baptismal vowes, to say no more, you have sworn to God, you have lifted up your hands : you are those that have undertaken that you would be true to God to your lives end : if these vowes have been any way strengthened, oh ? remember *Zedekia's* case, *Ex. 17. 18, 19. Seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant (when low he had given his hand) and hath done all these things, he shall not escape : therefore thus saith the Lord God, as I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompence upon his own head.* Remember it, you may play fast and loose with man, you must not think ever to carry it away by playing fast and loose with God.

4. If you should not stand, you loose all you have wrought : all your prayers, tears, professions, practises, sufferings are all gone if you give out at last, &c.

5. While you stand by God, God hath promised to stand with you : and the truth is, if I have but one God, tis no great matter for all the tyles in *worms*. There be a thousand Devils, but all those Devils are in ene chain, and the end of that chain is in the hand of
one

one God : oh ! God will shew himself strong. 2
*Corin. 1. 6. 9. For the eyes of the Lord run to and
 fro through the whole earth, to shew himself strong in
 the behalf of them, whose heart is perfect towards
 him.*

Quest. *But what shall I do to stand ?*

Ans. 1. If ever you would stand, if ever you
 would be firm standing Christians indeed, take heed
 you be not *light and proud Christians* : a feather will
 never stand against a whirlwind, Errour and pro-
 phaness are most apt to breed in proud hearts. The
Proud and Blasphemers are put together, (2 Tim. 3.
 2.) Be but *humble* christians, that's the way to be
 standing steady christians : if ever you would be steady
 in your stations, you must be low in your own eyes : do
 not you go and judge. And now ? we shall have another
 kind of Religion come up, as we have had it a great
 while ; such a man cannot be an honest man, alas, he is
 a Presbyterian, he's an Independant, he's an Anaba-
 ptist, &c. Now, all our great business will be, such a
 man cannot be a good, an honest man, for he doth not
 conform : on the other side he cannot be an honest
 man, for *he doth conform*. These are poor things :
 I blesse God, I lay not the stress of my Salvation upon
 these : tis true, I cannot in conscience conform, but I
 do not lay the stress of salvation on it, as I did not
 lay the stress of my salvation on my being a *Presby-*
terian ; I confesse I am so, and have been ; it hath bin
 my unhappinesse to be alwayes on the sinking side, yet
 I lay not the stress of my salvation upon it. 'Tis my
 conscience, but it may be I have not so much light as
 another man, and I professe in the presence of God,
 could

could I *conform* without sin to my own conscience, I would ; If I should doe any thing against my conscience, I should sin , and break my peace, and conscience, and all, and never see good day : doe not then spend the strength of your zeal for your Religion in censuring others. That man that is most busie in censuring others, is alwayes least employed in examining himself. Remember good *John Bradford*, he would not censure *Bonner* nor *Gardiner*, but saith he, they called *John Bradford*, the *hypocriticall John Bradford*, &c. I doe not speak this, as though I can, or did in conscience approve of those things for which I must suffer, that I cannot approve of them, but to take off people from those things that are so far from the foundation. Look you but to the main things, and look but into your own hearts, examine them, and then you need not be much perswaded to look about to others.

2. You must take heed you be not *loose Christians* : will you remember one thing from me (the God of heaven grant you never live to see it verified) a *loose Protestant*, is one of the fittest persons in the world to make a *strict Papist*. Tell not me of his Protestantisme, being a Drunkard, 'tis because his King, or Countrey are Protestants where they live. Ther's no Religion in a loose liver : if ungodlinesse be in the heart, 'tis no difficult thing for error to get into the head. A loose heart can best comply with loose principles : see, if they will not be of any Religion in the world that's uppermost ; let the *Turks* prevail, they would soon be of his Religion.

3. Take heed of being *worldly Christians* : oh ! this is the *David* that hath slain his ten thousands. A worldly

ly

ly heart will be bought and sold upon every turn to serve the Devils turn. Come to a worldly heart, and but promise him *thirty pieces of silver*, he will *betray* his *Saviour*. The temptations of the world are great upon us at this time, you that are Husbands and Parents know it ; the world is a great temptation, but if we be overcome by the world, and the world not overcome by us, we shall never be able to overcome any one temptation that is offered to us. Therefore that's an admirable support, *In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world* : I have overcome the world *for you*, and likewise I have overcome the world *in you*. Oh Lord, if thou wilt but overcome the love and the fear of the world, if thou wilt but arm us against the smiles of the world, then come what will, we shall stand stedfast.

4. Take heed you be not *hypocriticall Christians* : *i. e.* take heed you doe not receive the truth, and onely receive the truth, and not receive the truth in the love of that truth, *2 Thes. 2. 10.* You have received the truth, but have you received the truth in the love of that truth which you have received ; want of this, is that damnable occasion to *Popery* ; *And with all deceiveablenesse of unrighteousnesse in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, and for this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lye, that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth.* 'Tis just with God they should fall into *errours*, whose hearts did never love *reall truths*. Better never receive the truth, then to receive it, and not in the love of it.

Take heed of being *venturous*, and *God-tempting*
Chri-

Christians : what's that ? when doe I tempt God ? I tempt God when I doe run into a Pest-house, and say, God will preserve me from the plague. Take heed of running upon temptations to sin, whether it be in *principles* or in *practice*. I could tell you of two *spirituall Pest-houses* in *England* if I had time, for *principles* one, and for *practises* another ; I doe not say that I mean *Play-houses* on the one hand, or *Mass-houses* on the other hand. Certainly Brethren, I read of *Julian*, that wicked bloody *Apostate*, that he sunk into that his Apostacy first, by going to hear *Libanius* preach, mistake me not, I am not against your hearing the *Ministers of Christ*, for a man may be a *true Minister*, though he be a *bad Man* ; all the world can never answer the instance of *Judas*, who was a true Minister though a bad man ; while I plead for the *truth of his Ministry*, I doe not spread a skirt over the *wickednesse of his life*. The *Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses Chair, hear them*. But that which I mainly aim at, is this, do not you go, and run, and venture your selves upon temptations : you have heard of a *superstitious* or *Idolatrous* worship, you have a moneths mind to see this, and what if so be when you are found in Satans way, Satan should lay his paw on you, and claim to you, what doe you there in Satans ground. Would you be found when you come to die in a *Play-house*, or in such a place where the true God is *Idolatrously worshipped* ? 'Tis a great truth, if you would not be found in the Devil's power, doe not be found in the Devil's pound. Brethren, we must know, Satan is busie enough to tempt us; we need not go to tempt him : *Eve* lost all that she had by hearing one Sermon, but

'twas

'twas from the Devil. Therefore, if you would not have your Pockets pickt, doe not trade amongst Cheaters : 1 Tim. 6. 3, 5. *If any man teach otherwise, &c.* (then that ye have received, and we preached) *from such withdraw thy self*; that's a good, honest, laudable separation, *from such withdraw thy self*.

6. *Where God doth not find a mouth to speak, doe not you find an ear to hear, nor an heart to believe.* (pray mind it, this I am sure is of concernment) This is one of the grand points in my Card or Compass, on which I hope I shall venture all. If any man come with a Doctrine not *according to the word of God*, let him carry it whether he will, what have I to doe with it? Either you come from God or no, if you doe, shew me his word, and I'll believe it, if not, open your pack where you please, &c. where God doth not find a mouth to speak, where you have not a precept, promise, threatening, or example in the word of God, let them talk their hearts out, 'tis nothing to me, to my Religion, to my salvation.

Object. But what ground have you for this?

Answ. Jesuit, I will tell you my ground: this is my great hold I have against *Poperie*. Could they convince me of this, *that I must believe with an implicate faith because they say it*, I think it would not be long before I turn'd *Papist*.

Quest. But why must I not believe it with an implicate faith.

Anf. Look you into those three great Scriptures Mat. 15. 2. *Why do thy disciples transgresse the traditions of the Elders?* The Jewes come and tell Christ, he was not a true Son of the Church of the Jewes, he
was

was disobedient to the Church of the Jews; why? thou hast disciples that walk not as they ought; what doe they doe? they commit an unpardonable sin, *they transgresse the traditions of the Elders*, they break one of the greatest Commandements: what's that tradition? *They wash not their hands when they eat bread*: This was the great sin, and they charge it on him, eat with unwashen hands: why, why bring you in this tradition? what have you to say for it? what's that to the purpose, prove *Jesus Christ* that there is any thing in the word of God that is *against* washing? But, prove you out of the word of God where they are *bound* to wash before they eat? if you will give out your imposition, make out your institution; and let me tell you, you talk of tradition, but first you set up an Altar God never thought of, and secondly you pull down Gods Altar, *why do you also transgresse the Commandement of God by your tradition? for God commanded, saying, Honour thy Father and Mother; and he that curseth Father or Mother, let him dye the death; but ye say, whosoever shall say to his Father or Mother, it is a gift by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, and honour not his Father or Mother, he shall be free; thus have ye made the commandement of God of none effect by your tradition: ye Hypocrites, you are told of it long ago, well did Esaias prophesie of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.* They draw neer, wash their hands, wash their cups, and have filthy souls, *they honour me with their lips, &c.* But though their principle, their heart is bad, their worship is good, is it not? no, *In vain* the

they doe worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandements of men. So then, my Brethren, remember, all those that teach for doctrines the precepts of men, in vain doe they worship God. Here's an innocent command, not against the word of God ; but this command, you *must wash before you eat*, if you doe not wash, you doe transgresse the tradition of the Elders ; but let you starve Father and Mother, if you give but to the Church, to a Nunnery, Friery, &c. 'tis all one : so that all those that will for doctrines teach the traditions of men, will render the commandements of God of none effect, *in vain do they worship me*. Look therefore whereever God doth not find a tongue to speak, doe not you find an ear to hear, nor an heart to believe. Christians, if you expect *Christs benediction*, alwayes call aloud for *Christs institution* : so Col. 2. 18, 19. one of the greatest steps you have against Popery, *Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of Angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, &c. Deut. 12. 32. What things soever I command you, observe to doe it, thou shalt not adde thereto, nor diminish from it*. There are no *Wens* in the body of God's precepts, therefore none of them to be cut off. You must not deal with God's Ordinances, as that Tirant *Procrustes* did with men, if they were too long for his Bed, he would cut them shorter, if too short, he would pull their limmes out of joynt to make them longer. Never think your selves in conscience bound to lend an ear to that which God doth not find a mouth to speak.

7. Would you stand fast, beware of shaking doctrines :

doctrines : what are those ? there are a great many of such doctrines that are shaking ; give me leave to instance in three or four.

1. As you love your souls, *beware of all doctrines that tend to, and preach up licentiousnesse, loosnesse, and profanenesse.* Should any tell you, you may lawfully violate and profane the *Sabbath*, doe not believe it: the doctrine of the Gospel is a doctrine of godlinesse, *it teaches us to deny ungodlinesse and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world* : therefore if you find any doctrine, at any time, that should have the least tendency to encourage you in any sin, know, 'tis a doctrine *against* the Gospel.

2. Whereever you find *any doctrine, that shall tend to the lifting up of man's free will, and debasing of God's free grace*, know, 'tis a wicked doctrine, and against the genius of the Gospel. Perhaps the *Papists* will tell you, *we are alive*, Paul tells you, *we are dead*. They say that we *can doe* any thing, many things that we talk to the world we cannot doe ; they say, that we can save our selves, and close with Christ if we will, whereas the *Apostle* tells you, *1 Cor. 1. 14. The naturall man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishnesse unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* It may be they will tell you, a naturall man *may* love God with his heart, really as so, and savingly, whereas the *Apostle* tells you, *Rom. 8. 7. The carnall mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject unto the law of God, neither indeed can be.* Remember it, in all those doctrines wherein we doe agree with those whom we call *Pelagians*, and their brood the *Arminians*, so far
we

we agree with the *Jesuits*, and the *worst* of *Papists*.

7. As you would avoid Hell, *avoid all those doctrines that would lift up self-righteousnesse, and debase the righteousness of Christ*; I fear I shall never be in that capacity that I would, to stand you in stead in this particular. I confesse I am against forty things in *Popery*, but my whole soul is here engaged: if that doctrine be a truth, I never expect salvation by God; either I must be saved by Christ alone, or else I must not be saved by Christ at all: though Christ will never save me without sanctification, yet Christ never intended my sanctification should merit his salvation: Be as holy as you can, as if there were no Gospel to save; yet when you are as holy as you can, you must believe in Christ, as if there were no Law at all to condemn you. Come and tell me of the merit of Saints, &c. I will believe that truth, when I believe the *Whore of Babilon* to be *Christs Spouse*, see *Phil. 3. 9. 2 Cor. 5. 21.*

8. Would you stand? *you must be praying Christians*: I confesse, when most of my strings are broken, there is yet one holds; there is a spirit of prayer (remember Atheist) among the Saints of God I can pray yet: and I had rather stand against the Canons of the wicked, then against the prayers of the righteous. Oh! *pray that you enter not into temptation*, or, if we enter into temptation, Lord, let not the temptation enter into us, pray, *if possible, let this cup passe from me*, but if not, let it not poyson me, but let me be bettered by it, and in due time deliver me from it. I believe, it would be a great temptation to you, if it should be said to you, you shall trade with no man any more, &c. you

have enjoyed these and these comforts, bid them adieu for ever, you shall have no more to doe with them, this would be a temptation. Temptations and tryals are great, and certainly where they are so, prayer should be strong. Ther's no relief to be expected on earth, all our relief is to be expected from God, and that's to be obtained by prayer. Pray, that God would be pleas'd above all things in the world to make you *sincere* : would you be *stedfast in your profession*, you must be *sincere in your practice*. To him that hath shall be given, that's a comfort, to him that hath but *truth* of grace, to him shall be given *growth* of grace.

9. Would you be steady Christians, then *make it your great work to attend the Ordinances that God hath prescribed to make you steady Christians* : you were told of this many years ago, concerning attending the Ordinances of God.

Quest. Pray what are those ?

Ans. 1. There are *secret Ordinances*. It may be thou canst not be so much in the *Pulpit* as thou would'st, oh ! be more in thy *Closet* : it may be thou shalt not have so many opportunities to hear so many *Lectures*, be more conscientious in thy *meditations* in secret : it may be thou shalt not have that freedome with God in *publick*, be more earnest with God in *private*.

2. *Mind your Families* more then ever : you have your *Children* and *Servants* call aloud upon you. How many grave faces doe I see at this time, that can tell me, Sir, I remember some twenty or thirty years ago, you could not passe the streets, but here was one Family *repeating* the word of God, another *singing* the praises of God, another *praying* to God, another *conferring*
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concerning the things of God : at that time we had not so many foolish absurd *excursions* into *streets* and *fields* as now. Oh ! for the Lords sake begin to take them up now ; let the *Amorite*, *Pereſite* and *Iebuſite* doe what they will ; but oh !! for you and your children, and your ſervants, do you ſerve the Lord ; up again with thoſe godly Exerciſes ; when we cannot *hear* a Sermon, then *read* a Sermon ; if we cannot hear a ſermon *well preach'd*, our *godly parents* would engage us to *read* Sermons *well penn'd* : if nothing new, let the word repeated and meditated call to mind what you have heard, oh ! reduce your ſelves to your Chriſtian frame : Let the debauched *Atheiſts* know, they have ſomething among you that is to be feared, that's your prayers : let them know, that though you have not thoſe opportunities you have had, yet you will improve thoſe you have. And you *Masters* of this Pariſh, for God's ſake *keep in your Servants* on this day more then ever, you are to be accountable for their ſouls ; and they will give you a thouſand thanks when they come to age, eſpecially at the day of Judgement ; oh ! then, bleſſed be God I had ſuch a Maſter, bleſſed be God I had ſuch a Miſtreſſe, bleſſed be God I had ſuch Parents.

Queſt. But then for publick Ordinances, what would you have us doe ?

Anſ. I. Whereever Chriſt doth find a tongue to ſpeak, I am bound to find an ear to hear, and an heart to believe. I would not be miſtaken, I bleſſe the Lord, I am not turned out of my Miniſtry for being a *Schiſmatick* ; I know *Schiſme is a ſin*, nor know I any of my Brethren that are ſo ; do not miſtake us therefore, doe
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not go and tell the *Jesuits* we are *Schismaticks*, for we are none: But this I would advise, (I speak as though I were dying) doe whatsoever lies in your power, to hear such whom you think to be godly: beg of God, be earnest with him, that he would give Pastors after his own heart, and whom God hath sent: not such as may daub with untempered mortar, and not such as may prophesie lyes in the name of the Lord; not such as may be clouds without water; but such as may be guides of the blind, burning and shining lights, faithfull Stewards. What shall you doe? what did you doe twenty or thirty years ago? what did the good old *Puritans* doe, they were not *Schismaticks*. But as much as lies in you possible, hear them whom in your conscience you judge God doth hear; oh! then expect the word of God should come to your hearts, when you have ground to believe that it comes from your Pastors heart: I must confesse, I intend to doe the same, when put into the same condition with you: I acknowledge, I am bound in conscience to hear the word of God, but I must take care *whom* I hear; hear those by whom God speaks, I hope God will grant severall such.

Take but this advice more, and I have no more to say. *Whatever abuse you find either in Pastor or People, or wherever you find it, doe not* you go as your old use hath been, to rail, caluminate, back-bite, and speak behind their backs, this is wicked and ungodly; but doe every one according as God prescribes us that are members of any visible Church; what's that? If I know any thing against my brother, doe not go and make a scuttler and a noyse, and back-bite, but take the rule of Christ, *If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go*
and

and tell him of his fault between him and thee alone, if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother, but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, and if he neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church, and leave the blood at their door, thou hast freed thine own soul. I hope by God's grace I shall do so. Thus I have now spoken something from this Scripture : I cannot speak what I desire, for besides the exhausting of my spirits, there is something to be done after, viz. a Funerall Sermon : I shall say no more, but onely this, The God of heaven be pleased to make you mind these plain things : I can truly say this, I have not spoken one word that I remember, which I would not have said to you if I had been jnst a dying, and been going to God as soon as gone out of the Pulpit, and the God of peace be with you ; onely mind that one thing , When God doth not find a tongue to speak, doe not you find an ear to hear, nor an heart to believe.

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SERMON XII:

H E B. 12. Ver. 1.

Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

IN the former Chapter, you have a *spiritual Chronicle*, or a Catalogue of the Lords Worthies, and all the eminent effects of their *faith*; and now the Apostle comes to make use of this History, that he had produced thorough so many successions of Ages, of all the holy men of God that excelled in *faith*. *Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, &c.*

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The Text is wholly *Hortatory*. In it observe?

1. The *premisses* or principle the Apostle worketh upon, *seeing we are compassed, &c.*
2. The practical *Inferences*, which are deduced from thence, and they are two.
 1. One concerning the privative part of our duty, *Let us lay aside every weight, &c.* there is something external and without, like to clog us in our way to heaven--*every weight*; & something within that will hinder, and trouble us within: therefore he saith, *And the sin which doth so easily beset us.*
 2. Here is the positive part, *Let us run with patience the race that is set before us.* There's motion [Run] the manner [with patience] the stage or way [the Race that is set before us.]

My purpose is to give you some brief thoughts upon this useful and practical inference of the Apostle, from the Histories of the faithful before recorded. Therefore I will summe up the whole Text in this point.

Doct. *The people of God that have such a multitude of examples of holy men and women set before them, should prepare themselves to run the spiritual race with more patience and cheerfulness.*

There are two things in this Doctrine; the *Encouragement*, and the *Duty*. I shall open both with respect to the circumstances of the Text.

First, the *Encouragement*; *A multitude of examples*, or as in the Text, *seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses*: Mark, here are witnesses, a great cloud of witnesses, and these compassing us round about,

First,

First, here are *witnesses*; by that term we are to understand those worthy Saints mentioned and reckoned up in the former Chapter, *Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, &c.* all the Saints of God that have had experience of the goodness of his providence to them; and the fulfilling of his promises; they are all called *witnesses*, why? because, they depose a testimony for God, and speak to future generations to be constant, as they did, that they might receive the like reward. This *witness* was partly in their *faith*, and partly in the *fruit* of their *faith*.

1. They witnessed by their *faith* (*Joh. 3. 33.*) *He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true.* A man that hath soundly digested the promises, that expresses his *faith* by chearfulness and patience under all difficulties, troubles, delays, and those sundry trials that he meets with, he gives it under hand and seal, proclaims it to the world that he hath to do with the true God. And

2. They witnessed in the fruits of their *faith*, as they give us an instance of Gods fidelity towards them that *faithfully* adhere to, and firmly believe in his promises; so it is said (*Heb. 6. 12.*) *Be not sloathful, but followers of them who through faith, and patience inherit the promise:* Let *faith* but set *patience* awork, do but hold out a little while with God, and you may learn by the example of all those holy men we shall inherit the promises, they shall be made good to a tittle, and not one thing fail of all that the Lord hath spoken; as these holy men were ex-

exercised and tossed to and fro, but it succeeded well with them at the last. Oh ! then let us hearken to the deposition of these worthy witnesses that are recorded in the Scripture, and with such an invincible resolution as theirs was, let us hold on our course towards true happiness : If we do not, they that are now propounded as witnesses to us, will at the day of judgment be produced as witnesses against us. And pray also let us remember that we are to continue and keep afoot that Testimony to succeeding generations ; for not only the Prophets, and holy men of God, were Gods witnesses, but all Gods people also are his witnesses ; (*Is.* 43. 10.) by their faith, patience, diligence, constancy, and chearfulness under afflictions, they are to give in under hand and seal to the world, that God is a true and faithful God. But now, if we either by our sinful walking, or by our drooping discouragements, discredit Christ and his profession, then we are witnesses against him ; we deny that Religion which we would seem to profess and cry up (*Tit.* 1. 16.) *They profess they know God, but in works they deny him* : and the more dangerous, because *deeds* are more deliberate than *words*, and so a greater evidence of what we think in our hearts. If we by drooping discouragements, and sinful walking discredit Religion, we deny it, and do in effect put the lye upon Christ. Therefore let us remember they were witnesses, and so must we.

2ly. By a figurative speech they are called a *cloud*, [having a cloud of witnesses] who so ? I might

might trouble you with many conceits Interpreters have had of this word *cloud*; say some, because of the raisedness of their spirits, because clouds fly aloft: *Clouds* for the fruitfulness of their doctrine, as clouds send down fruitful showers upon the earth; and *clouds*, because they cool and cover us from the heat; so some would gloss for our comfort: others with more judgement say, a *cloud* with allusion to the *pillar of cloud* which conducted the Israelites to *Canaan*; yet neither doth this come up fully to the scope of the Apostle; for the Apostle speaks not of a cloud that goes before us, but of a *cloud that compasses us round about*, and therefore a *cloud*; the reason why 'tis called so, is the number and multitude of those witnesses, as a cloud is made up of a multitude of vapors gathered together, and condensed into one body; and so the expression is often used (*Ez. 38. 9.*) *Thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land*, &c. noting the increase of the people when God would restore them, the multitude of converts: and so in profane Authors, *Livie* hath such an expression, an army of men is called a cloud: but this is enough to shew the intent of this expression, that there are a multitude, a very great number: though the godly comparatively, and with respect to the wicked are a few, yet considered in themselves they are a great number; for, if the *Martyrs*, and those glorious instances of heroick faith, and that under the Old Testament, when God's interest was more confin'd to one people, if there were such a Church then, of so great a number, what

will the whole Church of the Old and New-Testament be when we shall meet together in Heaven? We are often discouraged with the paucity of Professors, and are apt to think our selves to be *left alone*, 1 King. 19. 10. But let us remember there is a *Cloud of Witnesses*; we are not solitary now, and certainly we shall not want company when we come to Heaven, *To the innumerable company of, &c.*

Again, it meets with an ordinary and strong temptation which Satan suggests to the hearts of the godly, that they are *singular*, and matchless in *their afflictions*, that none of the people of God have ever undergone such difficulties as they are expos'd unto; and this makes them question their Father's affections, and put themselves out of the number of his children. I, but all these things are accomplished in the Saints of God before you; here is a *Cloud of Witnesses* that have been exercised and tried to purpose, (1 Pet. 5. 9.) They are troubled with a busie Devil, a naughty World, a corrupt heart, all have had their trial from God's correcting hand; *The same afflictions are accomplished in you Brethren, that are in the world.* So that we have many fellows, our lot is no harder then the Saints of God that have gone before us, for there is a *Cloud of Witnesses*.

3dly, Observe, The Apostle calls it a *Cloud* that compasses us round about; *i. e.* We have instances for every trial, Temptation, duty that we are put upon: *Here we have examples of those that have fulfilled the Commands of Christ on this side with an undaunted courage; and the examples of those*
that

that have born the *Cross* of *Christ* with an invincible patience: Here we have examples of those that have conquered *right-hand Temptations*, that have despised the delights of the World; and there of those that have conquered *left-hand Temptations*, that have not been broken and affrighted with the terrors of the World; all the Saints of God have trodden that way; the same paths wherein we are to walk after them; We cannot look this way or that way, but we have instances of Faith, confidence in God, and patience; *We are compassed about, &c.* In short, here lyes the encouragement that Christians should propound to themselves:

1. *That there are examples.* Christians of later times have more to answer for their *Infidelity*, than those of former ages; they that first believed the promises, believed without such a *Cloud of Witnessnes*, or multitude of examples; many have gone before us, that have broken the Ice, & that found good success from their own experience; they have commended God to us, as a true and faithful God, and will not you go on? When *Jonathan* and his Armour-bearer climbed up the Rocks of the *Philistins*, then the people were encouraged to go up after; So here are some that have gone before you, and it hath succeeded well with them.

2. *These examples are many*; not one or two that might be supposed to be singularly assisted, and to have eminent Prerogatives above the rest of their Brethren, but many in every age, a whole *Cloud* of them.

3. *There are examples of many rare and excellent men, the best that ever lived under Heaven.* Take

(*my Brethren*) the *Prephets* for an example, &c. Jam. 5.10.

4. They are propounded to us, not for their words onely, and for their profession, but for their *deeds*, for their bitter sufferings; and they abundantly manifest to us, that there is nothing *impossible* in our duty, or any thing so difficult but may be overcome through Christ's strength enabling us: They all had the same nature we have; they were of the like passions with us, flesh and blood as we are, of the same relations and concerns; and then on the other side, we have the same *Cause* with them, the same recompence of reward to encourage us, the same God and Saviour to recompence us; he suffered for *us* as well as for *them*; therefore we should follow in their steps; and hold fast our confidence to the end; for they have shewed us, that poverty, reproaches, death it self, and all those things that would look harsh, and with a gasty aspect upon the eyes of the *World*, are *no* such *Evils*, but that a *Believer* may rejoice in them, and triumph over them. I say, they have shew'd the blandishments of the *World* have not such a charm, but they may be renounced without any loss of considerable joy and contentment; and that the duties of Christianity are not so hard, but that a little waiting upon God will bring in Grace enough to perform them; Therefore saith the Apostle, *Seeing we have a Cloud of Witnesses, let us lay aside, &c.* And so I come to the encouragement, to the

Second thing, and that is the duty here pressed.

1. Here is the privative. 2. The positive part of our

our duty : Here is *mortification* and *vivification*. *Mortification*, *Let us lay aside, &c.* *Vivification*, *Let us run with patience, &c.* In both the branches he alludes to terms proper to *Races*: In a *Race* you know men strip themselves of their *cloathes*, and whatever is burdensome and heavy, that they may be the more light of foot; and so the Apostle bids us *lay aside every weight*; and they did withall *diet* themselves, that they might have no clog from within, 1 Cor. 9. 25. *Every man that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things*, i. e. They took care that they did not clog & indispose themselves for the race they were to run; but they verily run onely for a corruptible Crown; we for a Crown that is incorruptible and glorious; so according to this double practice of *Racers*, we are to cast aside every weight from without, &c. So here's a double object, laying aside *every weight*, and of *sinne*: There's *onus externum*, the weight without, that presses us down, and hinders our speed; and then there's *impedimentum internum*, there's *sin*, that which weakens *within*: By reason of the former we make little speed; by reason of the latter we are often interrupted; and therefore we must do as they that they might be swift and expedite, *lay aside every weight*, and be more temperate in all things. Herein a Runner in a Race differs from a Traveller; a Traveller strengthens himself for his Journey as well as he can, his clothes on, sometimes carries a great burden with him; but a *Runner* of a *Race* makes himself as light as he can. But to come more particularly to the words;

First,

First (*Lay aside every weight*) By *weight* is meant those things that burden the soul, and make our Heavenly Progress more tedious and cumbersome; and by *weight* is meant (I think) the *delights* and *cares* of the World, the multitude of secular business, all our earthly contentments and affairs, so far as they are a burden to us, hinder us in our way to Heaven; these must all be put off, *Luk. 21. 3, 4.* saith Christ, *Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, &c.* The heart that is deprest, cannot be so free for God, and the Offices of our Heavenly Calling, when we give way to *surfeiting, drunkenness, cares of this world,*

1. The heart may be overcharged with the delights of the World; *Surfeiting* and *Drunkennesse* must not be taken in the gross notion; you must not think of spewing, reeling, vomiting, as if to avoid these were a full compliance with Christ's direction; the heart may be *overcharged* when the stomach is not; there is a *dry drunkenness*, and a *more refined surfeiting*, and that is when the heart grows heavy, unfit for prayer, relishes not the things of the spirit; when the delights of the flesh clog the wheel, abate that vigor and chearfulness that we should shew forth in the Worship of God, and holy actions, when the delights of the flesh withdraw us from that watchfulness and diligence that is necessary in taking care for our souls, then the heart is overcharged; Voluptuous living is a great sin, it chokes the seeds of Piety so soon as planted in the heart, so that they can bring nothing to perfection, it brings a brawn and a deadness upon the Conscience

science & affections; there is nothing that hardens the heart so much, as the softness of carnal pleasure, (Jude 19.) *sensual, having not the Spirit : Sensuality* quenches our natural bravery and briskness of spirit that becomes a man; much more doth it hinder the sublime operations of the Spirit of God. Well then, remember Christians, you are not onely Travellers by the way, but Runners in a Race : If we were to speak to you onely under the notion of Travellers in a way, this were enough to wean you from the delights of the flesh, 1 Pet. 2. 11. *As strangers and Pilgrims abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.* The more you indulge these fleshly lusts, the more you hearten and strengthen the great Enemy of your souls, and starve the better part; but you are as Runners in a Race; by this Metaphor the duty is more bound upon you, much more should you beat down the body, and keep it in subjection; the Apostle hath a notable word 1 Cor. 9. 27. *I keep under my body, and bring it in subjection, &c.* I beat down my body; you must either keep under pleasures, or pleasures will keep you under; for a man is soon brought under the Power, Dominion and Tyrannie of evil Customs, and some brutish pleasure, by indulging the lusts of the flesh, 1 Cor. 6. 12. Be but a little addicted to any one thing, and you are brought under the power of it : The flesh waxes wanton and imperious, and a slavery grows upon you by degrees : The more you cocker carnal affections, the more they encrease upon you; and therefore you must hold the Reins hard, exercise a powerful restraint. *Solomon in his Penitentials gives us an account of his own folly,*

folly; and how fearfully he was corrupted this way, Eccl. 2. 20. *Whatsoever mine eyes desired, I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy, &c.* This was that which brought him to such a lawless excess, and at length to fall off from God. When we give Nature the full swing, and use pleasure with too free a license, the heart is insensibly corrupted, and the necessities of life are turned into Diseases, and all that you do, 'tis but in compliance with your lusts; your eating and drinking is but a meat-offering and drink-offering to lusts and carnal appetite. I remember Solomon saith, Prov. 29. 21.) *He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child, shall have him become his Son at length,* i.e. allow a servant too much liberty, and he will no more know his condition, but grow contemptuous, bold and troublesom; so it is here: We are all the worse for license; natural desires unless they feel fetters and prudent restraints, grow unruly & excessive: And therefore it is good to abate the liberty of the flesh, that the body may be a servant and not a Master; when you deny your selves in nothing, but satisfy every vain appetite, a custom grows upon the soul, and intemperance proves a Trade and an habituated distemper, so that you cannot when you would, upon prudent and pious respects refrain and command your desires; and therefore 'tis good sometimes to thwart and vex the flesh, as David poured out the water of *Beth-leem* that he longed for, 2 Sam 23. 17. not to deny our selves in what we affect & covet; lust grows into a wanton, and bold, and imperious, and so prescribes upon us, and we are brought under the power of these things.

2. The business and cares of this world ; for, these immoderately followed , and not in obedience to God , are a sore burden , and makes the soul heavy , and allows no time and strength for God and his service, and those happy opportunities of private communion with him; when we are incumbered with *much service*, we neglect that *one thing necessary*, Luk. 10. 42. and therefore Christians must take heed that the lean kine do not devour the fat ; that *Sarah* be not thrown out of doors instead of *Hagar*; that *Religion* be not thrust to the Walls, which should be our *prime and chief business*, while every business hath its time and course. The Scriptures knowing the proneness of our hearts to temporal things, deals with us as we do with a crooked stick, we bend it so much the other way , and therefore sometimes they forbid *necessary labour*, John 6. 28. *Labour not for the meat which perisheth, &c.* the meaning is not chiefly ; but it bends the stick another way, *set not your affections on things on the earth* ; A man must have some kind of affection to his Work here below ; but we had need to be bent the other way : We may gather this from this Precept, 'Tis better to incroach upon the World, than the World should incroach upon godliness. In short , things are a burden and clog to us, according as our *delight and scope* is ; if the pomp and encrease of the World be our end & scope, then Religion will be looked upon as a burden, that will be a *weight*, and all duties of godliness as a melancholy interruption, as they, (*Am. 2. 8.* *When will the Sabbath be over ?* The exercise of godliness will be a troublesome thing, and we shall
go

go about the work of religion as if we went about it not : But, on the other side, if heaven and heavenly things be our scope, then the world is a burden, and then we shall use it in the way, but not abusing, as taking up our rest here ; 1 Cor. 7. 31. 32. Man hath a body and a soul, and he doth provide for both, but for one in *subordination* ; the soul is the chief, and therefore we must not so look after the interests and concerns of the bodily life, as to forget the interests of the soul, or to neglect them. Many will not so grossly Idolize present things, so as to *renounce* things to come ; I, but they so often follow the things of the world, that they neglect their eternal concerns. The *happiness* of a people lies in *communion with God*, and therefore that must be looked after ; we must take heed that the cares of the world have not such a hand and power over us, as either to divert us from, or unfit us for these higher and nobler pursuits, the enjoyment of God in Christ. This is the first thing the Apostle speaks to these spiritual Racers, to *lay aside every weight, i. e.* the delights of the flesh, and the cares of the world.

2ly. The next thing to be laid aside is sin which doth so easily beset us. As we must guard against things without, so we must mortifie our corrupt inclinations within ; or else, it will soon make us weary of our heavenly race, or faint in it. *Sin* you know is twofold, *Original* and *Actual*, Actual sin is not meant primarily, for that is not *peccatum agens*, sin that easily besets us, but *peccatum transiens*, the sin that passes from us ;
and

and *original sin* is that which is emphatically called *sin*, Ro. 7. 8. Now this original corruption may be considered as merely *native*, or as *acquired* and improved into evil customs and habits ; for according to mens tempers and constitutions, as they are severally disposed, so by the corruption of nature they are inclin'd to one sin more then another ; as the channel is cut, so corrupt nature finds a vent and issue ; in every man there is some predominant sin, and in every regenerate person some relicks of that sin, from whence is the greatest danger of his soul ; thus *David* speaks of his iniquity, Ps. 18. 23. well then, this is *that sin that doth easily beset us* ; original sin improved into some tyranny or evil custome, which doth increase and prevail upon us more and more ; now, this is said [easily to beset us] for three reasons ; partly, because it hath a great power and restraint over us, and implies the whole man ; the members of the body, the faculties of the soul ; so great an interest hath it acquired in our affections, it doth *easily beset us*, it hath great power and command over us. Partly, because it sticks so close that we cannot by our own strength lay it aside, Jer. 13. 23. *Can the Ethiopian change his skin ? or the Leopard his spots ? &c.* A man can as soon change his *skin* as lay aside his *customs*, that are so deeply ingraven as the blackness of an Ethiopian, or the spots of the Leopard. And partly, because it mingles it self with all our motions and actions, Ro. 7. 21. &c. It easily besets us, 'tis present with us, it impells us, and sollicitates us, and draws us to sin further and

and further, and makes us negligent in what is Gods : we cannot do or speak any thing, but it will infest us in all our duties of piety, charity, justice ; on every side it is interposing, vexing, thwarting the motions of the spirit, and so abates our strength, vigour, and agility, and retards our course towards heaven and glory ; therefore, *lay aside* as every weight, so every sin, &c.

Qu. Now, what is it to [*lay aside* ?] or how can we lay aside, since sin sticks so close to us, and is ingraven in our natures ?

Ans. Certainly, something may be done by us ; for this is every where pressed as our duty, *Ep. 4. 22. Put off the old man*, and *1 Pet. 2. 11. we may put it off more and more*, though we cannot *lay it aside*. Then we are said to *lay aside the sin that so easily besets us*, when we prevent and break the dominion of it, that it shall not *raign over us*, *Ro. 6. 12. let not sin raign, &c.* Though it dwells in us, lives in us, and works in us, yet it should not *overcome* us, and bring us into bondage, and so it will not be imputed to our condemnation ; and at length when the soul shall be separated from the body, we shall be wholly free from it.

Qu. I, but what must we do that we may so repress it ? (the question returns) that we may break the dominion of it ?

Ans. I answer, this is the work of the spirit of God ; but we must know, the spirit of God doth work the work of *mortification* two ways : *By Regeneration*, and *after Regeneration* ; *By Regeneration*,
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tion, and so he doth immediately without any co-operation of ours mortifie the deeds of sin, gives sin its death wound: that which is left, is as a thing *mortified*, 'tis broken; the Scripture often speaks of this first work of Regeneration, *Ro. 6. 6. Col. 2. 11*. First, when we are planted into Christ, then we put off the body of sin; and though it doth not presently dye, yet its weakened, that it cannot *raign*, though it be not destroyed.

2. After Regeneration the spirit doth more and more destroy sin, the relicks of sin, this crucified body of sin, till it dyeth wholly away; this he doth *in us*, but not *without us*: *Rom. 8. 13. Through the spirit mortifie the deeds of the body*: Not the spirit without us, nor we without the spirit, but *ye through the spirit*. What is then required of us?

1. Seriously purpose not to sin, and promise to God to yield him unfeigned obedience. Especially should we make this promise in the use of those solemn rights by which the Covenant between God and us is confirmed. Take up a solemn purpose not to grieve the spirit, nor to break his law, *Psf. 119. 106. I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgements*: This purpose of heart is the root of all good actions; therefore in the confidence of Gods help, in the sence of thy own weakness, *Psf. 119 32*. we cannot lay wagers upon our own strength, yet 'tis our duty to engage our hearts to God: To sin against the light of our own conscience, and illumination of the spirit, and

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the chastening and instruction of our own reins; that aggravates our sin; but to sin against, and besides our fixed purpose of not sinning, that lightens sin; for then 'tis a sin of *weakness* and infirmity, not of *wilfulness* and malice; and then we can say as *Paul*, *Rom. 7. 19.* when the heart is fixedly bent towards God, *The evil which I would not, that do I.* Two ways may we be said to sin against *purpose*; either when we are overborn besides our purpose, our purpose still remains to please God: As, when the water breaks over the bank, the bank remaining; in such a case the fault is not in the bank, but in the violence of the flood. Or 2. when we break off our purpose, or consent to do evil; as when we cut through the bank, the water may easily make through. There's a great deal of difference between sin dwelling in us, and sin entertained by us; between sin remaining, and sin reserved: when you have a firm purpose against all sin, there is sin remaining; but 'tis not reserved, 'tis not kept and allowed.

2. Watch over thy self with a holy self-suspicion, because thou hast sin within thee that doth easily beset thee; therefore *Consider thy ways*, *Psal. 119. 59.* *Guard thy senses*, *Job. 31. 1.* but above all, *keep thy heart*, *Prov. 4. 23.* Conscience must stand *Porter* at the door, and examine what comes in, and what goes out; watch over the stratagems of Satan, and seducing motions of thy own heart.

3. Resist and oppose strongly against the first risings of the flesh, and the tickling and pleasing motions

motions of sin that doth easily beset us, when it doth entice us away from God; or do any thing that is unseemly and contrary unto the duties of our heavenly calling. Oh! remember we are not debtors to the flesh, *Rom. 8. 20.* Thou art tyed to the Lord by all obligations and indulgence: therefore break the force of sin by a serious resistance; check it; and let thy soul rise up in indignation against it; my business is not to pleasure the flesh, but to please the Lord.

4. Bewail thy involuntary lapses and falls with penitential tears, as *Peter went out and wept bitterly, Mat. 26. 57.* Godly sorrow is of great use for laying aside of sin, 'as salt potions kill worms: When children are troubled with worms; we give them salt potions; so these bitter penitential tears are the means God hath appointed to mortifie sin; that's the reason the Apostle saith *2 Cor. 7. 10, Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of:* 'Tis not only a part of repentance, but worketh persevering durable resolutions, a walking closely with God; 'tis a means God hath blessed to this end and purpose.

5. Recover from thy falls, renew thy combate; as Israel, when they were overcome in battle, they would try it again and again, *Jud 20. 28.* Take head of ceasing for the present; for though thy enemy seems to prevail, though the flesh seems to prevail against the spirit in the battle; yet thou shalt have the best of it in the war; by the power of grace thou shalt have the victory.

Thus I have gone over the *privative* part of our duty, *Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us*: I should have come to the *positive*, *Let us run with patience the race that is set before us*; there is the duty, *Let us run the race that is set before us*; and there is the manner of the duty, *Let us run with patience*. I should have shown you, That a *Christian life is like a Race* from Earth to Heaven, in a way of holiness, and exercise of Grace. This Race it continues as long as we continue in the World, from our Nativity, to our death; after death the strife is ended. Now in this race we must run, and so run that we may obtain the Crown, 1 Cor. 9. 24. Running is a motion, and a speedy motion; there is no lying, sitting, or standing, but still there must be running: We must make a further progress in the way to Heaven, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, Phil. 3. 13.

The Runner was not to enquire how much of the way already was past, but to strain himself to overcome what was yet behind: And so should we consider what sins are yet to be mortified, what duties yet untouched, almost untouched; what hard Conflicts are yet to be undergone, and still to hold on our way without twining aside, or halting because of difficulties, discouragements, stumbling-blocks. And there are fellows and co-partners with us, that run this Race, with whom we may strive in a holy emulation, who should go forwardest, who should be most forward in the course of pleasing God: Oh Christians! there are many contentions amongst us, but when shall we have this

this holy contention! *Heb. 10 24.* In a Race there is the *Agonethera*, the Judge of the sports; so here God observes all; no matter what the standers by say, the Judge of the sports must decide who must have the Crown, *1 Cor. 14 3, 4.* And then, at the end of the Race there is the Crown, *2 Tim. 4, 7, 8.* *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the Faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness, &c.* In a Race there are spectators; so there are here, God, Angels and Men, *1 Cor. 4, 9.* *We are a spectacle to the world, to Angels, and to men. &c.*

Thus for the similitude of our Race in our way to Heaven. Now wherein it differs.

This is a Race, not undertaken out of wantonness, but out of necessity: God hath called us to this course; and if we run not in this Race, we are undone for ever. And in other Races, but one had the Crown; here all are crowned, *2 Tim. 4, 8.* though they be not so eminent as the Apostle; here all are crown'd that run in the manner God hath requir'd; *Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me onely, but unto them that love his appearing.*

2. For the manner, [*with patience*] *Let us run with patience.* Patience is necessary,

1. Partly because of the length of the Race, and the distance between us and the promised Reward: Our Race cannot be ended but after some degrees of time; long waiting is troublesome to the flesh, and therefore we have need of patience.

2 Because we meet with many impediments, troubles and temptations by the way; there are spiritual adversaries with whom we must fight; for, we go on, we not onely run, but fight; therefore *run with patience, &c.*

3. Because the *spectators* will be ready to discourage us, We are set forth not onely as a spectacle to God and Angels, but to the World, and they will be ready to deride, scorn and oppose us for our zeal to God, and our forwardness in the wayes of God, to discourage us by bitter mockings, &c. therefore *let us run with patience the Race that is set before us.*

 FINIS.

THE
Righteous Man's death
LAMENTED.

A SERMON

Preached at

St. Austins, London,

August 23. 1662.

At the Funeral of that eminent Servant of
JESUS CHRIST,

Mr. SIMEON ASH,

Late Minister of the Gospel there.

PSALM 112. Ver. 6.

*The Righteous shall be had in
everlasting remembrance.*

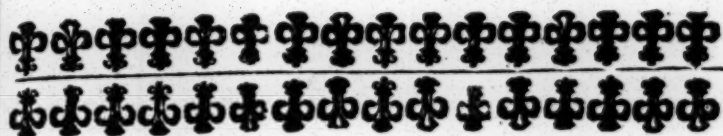
Printed in the year 1662.



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ISAIAH 57. Ver. 1.

*The righteous perisheth, and no
man layeth it to heart; and
merciful men are taken away,
none considering that the right-
eous are taken away from the
evil to come.*



WE are here met this Evening to perform
the last Office of Love for an eminent
and ancient servant of Jesus Christ, and
excellent Minister of the Gospel, Mr.
Simeon Ash, one who hath formerly
performed this Office for many other Ministers,
and now we are met to perform this Office for
him; and it is not long before others will meet to
perform the same office for us, so frail, so brittle,
and so uncertain is the life of man,

Now

Now the Text that I have chosen, is suitable for this occasion; For this Reverend Minister was first a righteous man; he was righteous in an Evangelical sence, he was one that was justified and sanctified. Secondly, He was a merciful man both in an active and passive sence; he was one that shewed mercy to the distressed Members of Jesus Christ, and he was one to whom God shewed mercy; this righteous and merciful man is now perished, as to his outward condition, not as to his everlasting condition; but as to his outward bodily condition he is perished, and he is taken away; the word in the Hebrew is very emphatical; *merciful men, Colliguntur*, are gathered; it is the same word that is used concerning *Josiah*, 2 Kings 22, 10. *Thou shalt be gathered to thy Fathers, and go to thy grave in peace, and shalt not see the evil that I will bring upon this Nation*. This godly and righteous man is now gathered, as ripe Corn in the Barn of Heaven; he is taken away from the evil that is to come, from the beholding that evil that is coming upon the sinful World; he is taken away in mercy, that he may not be troubled with the troubles that are coming upon many; he is taken away from the evil to come.

And thus you see how suitable the Text is to the occasion; there is onely one particular that I desire may prove unsuitable; for *the righteous and merciful man in the Text, perisheth, and no man considers, nor lays it to heart*: These words are *verba Commentantis & oburgantis*; the words of the Prophet bemoaning the spiritual security of the people of Israel, chiding and reproving them for their spiritual Lethargy:

charge : Now I desire that this part may not prove
suitable, but that all of you may lay to heart the
death of this ancient, merciful, righteous man.

The observations from the words are these
six.

First, *That the righteous man must perish as well as
the unrighteous.*

Secondly, *That the perishing of a righteous man is
nothing but his gathering to God, Christ, and the blessed
company of Saints and Angels.*

Thirdly, *That a righteous man as long as he liveth,
is the preservative of a Nation, and the supportor of a
Kingdom, the Chariots and Horsemen of a Nation.*

Fourthly, *The death of a righteous man is a Warn-
ing-piece from Heaven, a Beacon set on fire to give no-
tice of evil approaching.*

Fifthly, *That God doth on purpose take away righte-
ous men, that they may not see the evil that is coming on
a Nation.*

Sixthly, *That it is a great and common sin not to
consider and lay to heart the death of a righteous man.*

First, it is a common sin, and therefore it is set
down in the greatest latitude: *the righteous perisheth,
and no man layes it to heart; that is, very few : And
merciful men are taken away, no man considering; that
is, very few.*

2dly, It is a great sin; and therefore the Prophet
Jeremy in the former Chapter calls to all the
beasts of the Field to devour, that is, all the Ene-
mies of the Church to destroy the children of Is-
rael, because they drank strong drink, filling them-
selves with merriment, and promised themselves
happy days, but did not consider that *the righteous
were*

were taken away from the evil to come.

I shall begin with the first, That the righteous perish as well as the unrighteous.

How is it that the righteous perish? not in their soul, they cannot perish so; nay, the truth is, they cannot perish properly in their bodies; for the bodies of the Saints never totally and finally perish; for the very dust of the Saints in the grave, is precious in God's sight, and they are asleep in Jesus, and by the power of Jesus Christ they shall be raised again glorious bodies: Nothing perisheth of a righteous man by death totally and finally, but sin; and therefore the meaning of the Word is as *Musculus* and *Justin* Martyr observe, *perit*, perisheth; that is, not according to the truth of the thing, but according to the opinion of the world; and the proper language of this expression is this, *The righteous perish*, that is, the righteous must dye and go down to the house of rottenness as well as others, and that upon a four-fold account.

First, Because the righteous are included within the Statute of death as well as the unrighteous; *statutum est*: Heb. 9. 27. It is appointed for all men once to dye; the righteous as well as the unrighteous: Indeed it is true, Jesus Christ hath taken away the hurt of death, but not death it self; Jesus Christ hath disarmed death, made death like the Viper that fastened upon *Paul's* hand, but did not hurt him; he hath made it like the brazen Serpent that hath no sting but a healing power in it: Christ hath sanctified death, conquered and sweetned death; at present we are all under the Statute of death, but at last this Enemy shall be destroyed, 2 Cor. 15. latter end.

2dly,

2dly, The righteous consist of perishing principles as well as the unrighteous; the righteous are earthly vessels, made of dust; their foundation is in the dust; their lives are a vapour as well as the lives of the unrighteous.

3dly, The righteous must dye as well as others, because they have a body of sin that they carry about with them; for there is no man so wise, that lives and sins not, *Eccles. 7. 20.* Wherefore there is that which deserves death in a righteous man.

Lastly, and especially, The righteous must perish upon a peculiar account; *For if we had hope onely in this life, (saith the Apostle) we are of all men most miserable;* and therefore they must perish to keep them from perishing; they must say as *Themistocles*, *Periissem nisi periissem;* they must dye, that they may rest from their labour; for here is not our rest, *Micah 2. 10.* there remaineth a rest for the people of God; there is no rest in this World; the word *quies* wants the plural number.

2dly, The righteous must dye, that they may have their reward, their Crown of glory that God hath laid up for them; they must first fight the good fight, and finish their course, and then they shall receive a Crown of glory.

3dly, They must dye, that they may be free from sin; for they shall never put off the body of sin, till they put off the body of flesh.

4thly, They must dye, that mortality may be swallowed up of life, that corruption may put on incorruption.

5thly, They must dye that they may be perfect in Grace.

Lastly,

Lastly, They must dye, that they may see God face to face, and be for ever with the Lord, which they cannot do till they dye; therefore blessed be God that the righteous must perish. If a man should bring news to a righteous man, that he should always live on Earth, always be young, rich and healthful, it would be unwelcome news; for while we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord, and subject to sin; and therefore when *Peter* asked *Christ* what should be done with *John*, *Christ* tells him, *If I will that he tarry till I come, what's that to thee?* from henceforth there went a report abroad that *John* should not dye, *John* 21. 32. Now the Apostle himself was much displeased with this report, and look't upon it as a great affliction that he should not dye, and therefore he himself confutes it; *But yet Jesus* (said he) *said not that he should not dye*; as if he had said, God forbid that I should not dye.

Before I come to the Application of this point, give me leave to speak something to the second point, and so I shall apply them both together.

The second Doctrine is this, *That the perishing of a righteous man, is nothing but a gathering of him to God, Christ, and the blessed Society of Saints and Angels in Heaven.*

This is contained in the second expression, *merciful men are taken away*; the word in the *Hebrew* is *Colliguntur*, they are gathered; it is exegetical of the former; they did not perish, but they are gathered

thered to God and Christ; there is a great deal of excellency, and a Magazine of sweetness in this expression, *they are gathered*; It implies two things.

First, That the righteous are in a scattered condition while they are in this World, and that three ways.

First, They are scattered among the wicked and ungodly of the World, as sheep among Wolves, as Lambs among Lions, rent and torn in pieces, forced to wander up and down in Sheep-Skins and Goat-Skins.

2dly, The righteous are scattered in the world one from another, and that two ways: 1. They are scattered by their different habitations; for the godly are forced to separate one from another, as Lot from Abraham. 2. They are scattered one from another by the cruel persecution of wicked men; and therefore you read *Acts 8*, that at that time when there was a persecution against the Church at Jerusalem, that *they were all scattered abroad*.

3dly, The godly are scattered in this life from the glorious presence of God in Heaven; indeed they are never scattered from the gracious presence of God, but sometimes they are scattered from the comforting presence of God; and as long as we live in this World, we shall be scattered from the glorious presence of God; for while we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord.

Secondly, This implies a bringing of God's people out of this scattered condition; it is a gathering of the righteous out of this world into another,

another, from a sinful persecuted world, into a sinless glorious world, from diversity of dwellings on earth, to dwell altogether in one heaven; it is a gathering out of the reach of men and devils: a gathering them not only to the gracious, but to the glorious presence of God and Christ, and to the souls of just men made perfect, and to the general assembly of the first born, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly *Jerusalem*, where they shall live together, never to be scattered again. To understand this the better, let me offer three things to you, shewing you that the godly are gathered to God three ways: In this life, at death, and at the day of judgment.

First, the righteous are gathered to God in this life, and that is at their first conversion; for by nature we are all aliens and strangers to God, scattered from any union or communion with God; not only scattered from the glorious but from the gracious presence of God. God made man at first to enjoy communion with himself, but *Adam* lost this by his sin, and now we are all *Cains* and Vagabonds, scattered from the love of God, and from union and communion with God; but when God converts any of the elect, he gathers them home to himself; for conversion is nothing but God's gathering them to himself in the second *Adam* that were scattered from him in the first *Adam*: the first *Adam* was a root of scattering, a root of separation from God; but the second *Adam* was a root of union and conjunction. Christ is the head, and
all

all the elect are all gathered together in him? 1 Eph. 10. that he might gather together in one all things in Christ; so that conversion is nothing but a gathering of the elect of God to Christ by faith, and a gathering to one another by love and charity.

Secondly, Gods people are gathered at death; here they are gathered to Christ by grace, but at death they are gathered to Christ in glory; here they are gathered to God by hope, but at death by fruition; here Christ is gathered to us, he comes down & dwells with us, but at death we shall be gathered to him, we shall go up, and be joyned with him. There's a great deal of difference between *esse cum Christo*, and *esse in Christo*; *esse cum Christo*, to be one with Christ is a Christians great security; but *esse in Christo*, to be one in Christ, it is a Christians great felicity: In this life we are gathered to God by faith; but at death by vision.

Lastly, we shall be gathered to God at the day of Judgment; it is called the day of the gathering of the Saints together; A day when all the Saints that are, have been, or shall be, shall all be gathered together. 2 Thes. 2. 1. I beseech you brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him at the great day; At the day of judgement we shall all be gathered together, and shall be all taken up to heaven; I mean all the righteous, and be ever with the Lord; and so much for the opening of the doctrine.

But here it may be objected; Are not the un-
G
righteous

righteous gathered by death as well as the righteous?

I answer, it is true, the unrighteous are scattered in this life, and gathered by death as well as the righteous; but with a great deal of difference.

First, the wicked are scattered in this life, but they are scattered from God; but the godly are scattered for God and for a good conscience many times, as they at *Jerusalem* were scattered: The godly are scattered from the glorious presence of God in heaven; but the wicked are scattered from the gracious presence of God on earth. Again the scattering of the wicked is a curse to them, and it is threatned as a curse, *Levit. 26. 32.* I will scatter you among the heathen, and draw out my sword after you; and wherever the wicked come, in what part soever of the world: the wicked are scattered, they bring the curse of God with them; and they bring the judgments of God on Towns or Cities where they are, as plague, famine, and sword, and all miseries. But the godly, when they are scattered, they are scattered as a blessing; into what Country or Town soever they come, they come as a blessing, they come like a ship laden with corn, to a Town ready to perish with famine; they come as a blessing four ways.

First, by their prayers, to pray down a blessing on the place where they come.

Secondly, they come as a blessing by their holy life and conversation, that is a loadstone to draw others to holiness.

Thirdly, they come as a blessing, by their holy
advice

advice and counsel that they give to the place where they come.

Nay fourthly, their very presence is a blessing; as long as *Lot* was in *Sodom*, *Sodom* could not be destroyed; so long as *Paul* was in the ship, the three hundred could not be drown'd. So that the godly come as a blessing wherever they are scattered; but the wicked are as chaffe scattered by the wind, and they are scattered as the dust of the earth: You know when the dust is scattered, it gets into mens eyes and blinds them, and falls upon their cloaths and sullies and defiles them; so the wicked, wherever they are scattered, they defile the place where they are scattered. The godly are as planets, that wander and move from one part of heaven to another, carrying light to the world.

Secondly, as the wicked are scattered while they live, so when they dye, they are gathered; it is true; but how? not to God, and Christ, and his Angels; but they are gathered to the devil, and his Angels, and to damned spirits: not as bundles of wheat into the barn of heaven, but as bundles of tares to be burned for ever in everlasting fire.

Now, if the righteous perish as well as others, and if their perishing be nothing but a gathering to God and Christ; then,

First, learn hence the preciousness of every righteous man; the great God will not gather things of no value; great men do not use to gather chaffe & straw; and therefore, when God saith of *Josiah*, I will gather thee to thy fathers, it was a sign he

was a precious pearl worth the gathering, and of a high value and account in the sight of God; and so is every true child of God; right dear and precious are they in the sight of God, both living and dying; they are bought with a great price; not with gold and silver, and other corruptible things; but they are bought with the precious blood of the Son of God: They are as precious to God as the apple of his eye; so precious that he hath given Christ for them and to them; so precious that he called them his Jewels, his peculiar treasure, his *Jedidiahs*, and therefore God will not suffer them to perish, but gather them to himself before the evil day come, as the husbandman gathers in the corn before the beasts go out into the field.

Secondly, Learn here what reason we have to be comforted in the death of a righteous man or woman, because their death is not a perishing, but a gathering to God and Christ, and the society of Saints and Angels. The death of a righteous man is no more then if a Merchant that hath abundance of Jewels in a far country, he should send for them home. Why death to a righteous man is nothing but Gods sending for his Jewels home. Such a phrase there is in *Mal. 3. 17.* In the day that I make up my Jewels they shall be mine. In this life they are imperfect Jewels; they are like gold in the oar mingled with a great deal of drosse; and death is nothing but a perfecting of these Jewels; death is nothing more; and God doth nothing by death, but as a gold-finder gather up
all

all his ends of gold and silver : It is nothing but just as if a Father should send for his Son home that had been a long while absent from him to his own House ; it is a carrying us to our Father's house : And therefore let us be comforted when our righteous Friends dye ; though their death be matter of sorrow to us , in regard of the loss that we sustain by their death ; and because their death is a Warning-piece of evil to come ; yet in regard of them, we have no cause to mourn. I speak this to those that are related to the righteous when they dye ; did you ever hear of a Husbandman that mourned for the carrying of his Corn into the Barn ? or a Jeweller mourn for making up of his Jewels ? Let us mourn rather that we are left scattered among the wicked of the Earth, and from the glorious presence of God and Christ ; and let us mourn for those that are scattered from Christ, and from grace ; and for those that whilst they live, are scattered, and when they dye, are gathered to the Devil and his Angels ; Let us not mourn for those that dye in Christ , but let us mourn for those that live out of Christ ; let us not mourn over the body that the soul hath left , but let us mourn over the soul that God hath left.

The third Use is of Consolation to all the people of God in reference to evil times that are coming upon us, or to the evil of times. Whatever befalls a Child of God in this life , though he be scattered by wicked men, from *England* into Foreign Countreys, though he wander up and down in Desarts and Wildernesses, though he be scattered from house to prison, yet there will be a gather-

ing time shortly; there will a time come when all the Saints shall be gathered to Christ, and to one another, never to part any more. The death of God's people is not a perishing, but a gathering; comfort your selves therefore with these words, against the fear of death; look upon death as a gathering, as a gathering to Christ; you are here as *Daniel* in the Lyons Den, as *Jeremiah* in the Dungeon; yet there will come a gathering; and if you dye in a good cause, you shall not perish, but be gathered to Christ, to his Saints and Angels.

But you will say, *If I were sure when I dye, that I should be gathered to Christ, to live for ever with him, this would be matter of great consolation to me; but you told me, the wicked are gathered by death as well as the godly; how shall I know whether (when I come to dye) I shall be gathered to the Devil and his Angels, or to Christ and his Angels? How shall I know whether I shall be gathered at death as a bundle of rares to be burned in Hell, or as bundle of Wheat to be carried up into the Barn of Heaven?*

I answer, You may know it by four things.

First, If you are righteous, then you shall be gathered to Christ at death; for the righteous shall go into everlasting life; Heaven is entailed upon righteous men; by righteousness I mean the imputed righteousness, and the imparted righteousness of Jesus Christ: I wave the explication of them, because time will not give leave. Know you not (saith the Apostle) that no unrighteous man shall inherit the

King-

Kingdoms of God ? Damnation is entailed upon unrighteous men.

Secondly, If you are merciful; the merciful man shall be gathered to Christ; if you are one that is full of bowels of compassion to the distressed Members of Jesus Christ; for Christ hath said it, *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.* Now if you are hard-hearted, covetous, worldly-minded, remember that Text, *He shall have judgement without mercy, that shews no mercy.*

Thirdly, He that is gathered to the second *Adam* by faith in this World, shall certainly be gathered unto Christ by vision in the other world; Christ Jesus will save all his Members; and you must know, that Faith is a transplanting Grace; it is not onely a heart-purifying, but a World-overcoming grace; it takes a man out of the old *Adam*, and put's him into the new *Adam*; it takes a man out of the root of scattering, and puts him into the root of union and conjunction: Wherefore you that are now joined to Christ by faith here, shall be joined to Christ in glory hereafter: But now you that are Vagabonds, *Cains*, and Aliens from the life of God, and from the life of Grace: You that are wooden Members, wooden Legs in Christ's body, that have no real conjunction with Christ, you shall not be gathered to him in glory.

Lastly, If you are gathered here to the Saints by love, then you shall be gathered to the Saints in Heaven, and to the everlasting enjoyment of God with them to all Eternity. Consider this, Every man shall be gathered (when he dies) to those whom he delights, and chooseth to keep company

with while he lives in this world : If you are gathered to the wicked in love and affection here, you shall be gathered to them at death in Hell and destruction; for it's pity companions should be parted : Wheat must to Wheat , and Tares to Tares; for Wheat and Tares shall not be bound together at the last day.

The last Use is of Exhortation : If the righteous must perish, and if their death be nothing but a gathering , then take this threefold Exhortation.

First , Let us labour to make the best use we can of our godly friends and Ministers before they are gathered ; let us do as *Elisha* did; he was told that his Master *Elijah* was to be taken up to Heaven, and therefore he would never leave him till he had got the spirit of *Elijah* doubled upon him : If *Elisha* had not thought that *Elijah* would have been taken up that day , he would never have followed him so punctually and inseparably as he did. O beloved, did you believe that text, *Zach. 1. 5.* of which we have often had experience, *Your fathers, where are they? and the Prophets, do they live for ever?* Indeed if they did live for ever , we might get good from them when we please, because we are sure never to lose them ; but they live not for ever , but must perish , and be taken up to Heaven : And therefore whilst we have them , let us make what use we can of them , before they be taken away from us. It is a great fault among the people of God, that they make no more use of their godly Friends and Ministers. I have known many that have godly Relations that have died , that it hath
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been the greatest burthen on their Conscience, that they got no more good by those godly Relations while they lived. Many of us deal with our Ministers as we do with a strange sight that is to be seen near our doors ; we are not much solicitous when we see it ; but a stranger that comes from a far Countrey, is curious, and very careful presently to see it. So do we in this City especially ; I have had experience of it by being here many yeares ; strangers that come out of the Countrey, many times get that good by a Minister, that his own people do not, because they think their Minister is continually with them : But a stranger knows he is there but for a day, and he hears so, that he carries Christ home with him, and a great deal of consolation also. Beloved, this is a great fault ; I beseech you remember, the righteous must be gathered ; let us therefore do with them as we do with Books that are borrowed ; if a man borrows a Book, he knows he must keep it but for a day or two, and therefore he will be sure to read it over ; whereas if the Book be a man's own, he layes it aside, because he knows he can read it at any time. Remember, your Ministers are but lent you, they are not your own, and you know not but God may take your *Elijahs* from you this night : Therefore make what use you can of them, while you have them.

2dly, Must the righteous be taken away ? Then let the righteous make conscience of doing what good they can before they are taken away. Beloved, if it were possible for the godly to grieve in
Heaven,

Heaven, this would be their greatest sorrow, that they have done God no more service here upon Earth. Be wise for God, O ye righteous; do as old men do that have rich places and offices; they labour to buy the reversion of their places for their children; so must you to whom God hath given great gifts and graces, labour to propagate your gifts and graces, that there may be no loss by your death. Observe the care of St. Paul the aged in his exhortations to Timothy, 2 Tim. 4. 5, 6. *Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an Evangelist, make full proof of thy Ministry; why so? for I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand; and therefore work thou, see that thou endure affliction, preach the Gospel as becomes a Minister of the Gospel, that there may be no loss by my departure; so in 2 Tim. 2. 2. The things that thou hast heard of me among many Witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men that shall be able to teach others also.* Hath God committed any thing to you? a Treasure of Learning or Grace? commit it to young Ministers, that they may commit it to others, that so there may be a succession of gifts and graces: Do as Physicians do, that labour to communicate their skill to their Children, and to others; so should we, that so there may be a succession of godly ones, that godliness may be entailed upon us and our Relations.

Thirdly and lastly, let us all labour to be such, that when we dye, when we come to be gathered, we may be gathered to Christ, and his Angels; & not to the Devil, and his Angels. And for that purpose, let us labour to be merciful and righteous,

ous, and let us be gathered to Christ by faith, and to one another by love and dear affection; & then we shall be gathered at the great day to Christ, and the blessed company of Saints and Angels.

There are four observations yet behind, but I must wave them at this time.

I have now another Sermon to Preach, and I cannot without injury to you that are alive, and without wrong to the memory of my dearly beloved brother, but speak something of him at whose funeral we are met this evening, not so much for his commendation, he needs it not, but for our imitation; it is pitty, great pitty something should not be said that this reverend minister though dead, may yet preach this night; and I have so much to say of him, that I know not where to begin; and when I have begun, I hardly know how to make an end: I must confess, the little time allotted me for the providing for this solemn work, & the necessary avocations in this little time, have hindered me from informing myself about his breeding and manner of education at *Emanuel Colledge* under Mr. *Stooker*, and his excellent carriage and converse with Mr. *Hildersam*, Mr. *Dod*, Mr. *Ball*, Mr. *Langley*, and other ministers famous in their generations; and the many pressures and hardships that he suffered in those parts and times, for the keeping of his conscience pure from that which he counted sin; and therefore I must draw a vail over that part of his life, and confine my discourse only to the time since his coming to live with us in *London*, which is about about the space of twenty two, or
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three and twenty years ; all which time, I have had the happiness to be intimately acquainted with him, insomuch as that I can freely and clearly profess, and that with a sad heart, that I, and many others, have lost a real, wise, and godly friend, brother, and fellow-labourer in the Lord ; the Church hath lost an eminent member, and choice pillar : and this City hath lost an ancient, faithful, and painful minister ; who by his prayers and holy life, did seek to keep off the Judgments of God from falling upon us ; and the less sensible the City is of this loss, the greater is the loss. I fear we may too truly repeat the words in the Text, *The righteous perisheth, and no man lays it to heart ; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come.* I have read of *Philo the Jew*, and by chance met with the same in the life of *S. Ambrose*, that when they came to any City or Town, and heard of the death of any godly man, though never so poor, they would both of them mourn exceedingly, because of the great loss that place had by the death of that godly man, and because it was a warning-piece from God of evil approaching. But we have had many godly men, and godly ministers, taken away of late, and yet I fear me, but few lay it to heart ; and therefore as I said, the loss is the greater to this City, because it is so little sensible of it. It is a great loss also to his relations ; his wife hath lost a dear and loving husband, his sister a dear brother, his parish and congregation a faithful pastour.

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The ministerial excellencies of many ministers were collected and concentrated in one *Simeon Ash*; he was a *Bezaleel* in Gods tabernacle, a master builder, an old disciple, a Polycarpe, a Christian of long standing in the school of Christ, a burning and a shining light, one whom many ministers and other good Christians called father, in so much that it was a common proverb in this City, father *Ash*; and I believe, many experimentally lament over him, as the King did over the Prophet *Elisba*; *My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof!* For he lived desired, and died lamented; not only in the City, but I believe in very many places in the Country where he was known. But more particularly, there were twelve excellencies that I observed in this Reverend Minister, and my dear brother, that were as twelve jewels or precious pearls in that crown with which God had crowned him: I shall name them for your imitation and benefit; he needs them not, for he is above our Eulogy.

The first and chief Jewel that did beautifie and adorn this our brother, was his sincerity and uprightness of heart; which indeed is not a single grace, but the soul of all grace, and the interlineary that must run through all grace; for what is faith if it be not unfained? what will love to God profit you if it be not without dissimulation? what is repentance worth if it be not in truth? as the body without the soul is a rotten carcassee, so is all grace without sincerity; this is the soul of all grace, this is the girdle of truth,

truth. Sincerity is that which girts all our spiritual armour together, and makes them useful ; what advantage is it to have the breast-plate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the helmet of hope, if they be but painted things ? it is the girdle of sincerity that makes all the other parts of our armour useful. Now this excellent grace of sincerity was eminent in this our dear brother ; he was a true *Nathanael*, in whom there was no guile ; I mean, no allowed hypocrisie ; and this was that which carried him through the pangs of death with a great deal of comfort ; for he was able to say with *Hezekiah*, *Remember, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart.* He could say with *Paul*, *This is my rejoicing, the testimony of my conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, I have had my conversation in the world.*

Secondly, another Jewel was his humility ; this is a grace that he was cloathed withal, and it is a rare grace ; for God dwells with the humble ; he resists the proud, but he gives grace to the humble. This reverend minister was low in his own eyes, and therefore very high in Gods eyes ; he had a mean esteem of himself, and therefore he was in high esteem with God. He was as *Jacob* said of himself, less then the least of God's mercies, and therefore he was made partaker of the best of God's mercies. He was like an ear of corn full of fruit, bowing down in thankfulness to God.

Thirdly, another Jewel was the fruitfulness of his discourse ; for it may be said of him, as it
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was of Christ, he went about doing good; wherever he went, he scattered his goodness; this all that knew him, know to be true. He was full of good discourse wherever he came; when I was with him in his sickness, he took occasion to complain much, and not without just cause; (God grant his complaint may make impression upon our hearts) he complained that it was a great fault among ministers, that when they met together, they discoursed no more of Christ, of heaven, and of the concernments of the other world; and professed, that if God should restore him, he would be more careful in his discourse, and more fruitful then ever yet he had been.

Fourthly, another Jewel that beautified this righteous man, was his mercifulness; He was a merciful man, which he manifested not only in his charity to the members of Jesus Christ, but in his frequent visiting of sick persons; and persons that needed his spiritual physick. I know not any minister in the City more careful in visiting the sick then he was.

Fifthly, another Jewel was his prudence and spiritual wisdom; he was not only a pious and godly, but a wise and prudent minister; that had zeal for God, but knew how to mingle his zeal with discretion; discretion indeed without zeal is nothing but carnal policy; but zeal without discretion, is nothing but frantick fury; discretion without zeal will quickly eat out the heart of religion, and eat religion out of the heart. Zeal without discretion, is not a coal
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from the Altar, but a coal kindled by the Wild-fire of passion, that is able to set a Nation on fire; but this Reverend Minister had zeal sweetly tempered with discretion.

Sixthly, Another Jewel was his patience; God was pleased to exercise him with long and great afflictions by reason of the Gout, that did often, especially of late years affix him to his bed, and afflict him with great pain; but God was pleased to put his everlasting Arms underneath him, supporting him under all his pains, and giving him a great measure of patience, insomuch that in patience he did possess his soul, and patience had its perfect Work in him.

The seventh Jewel was his high valuation of Jesus Christ, a written copy for us to follow, and for you his people also. Being with him in his last sickness, he exhorted me and other Ministers with him, to preach much of Jesus Christ, and to speak to him of Jesus Christ; and he said, *When I consider my best duties, I sink, I dye, I despair; but when I think of Christ, I have enough, he is all, and in all.* I think these were his very words. *I desire (said he) to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified: I account all things dung and dross, that I may be found in Christ:* To this effect he spake in the morning before the evening in which he died, speaking much of Jesus Christ.

Eightly, Another Jewel was his diligence in preaching the Gospel in season and out of season; in the time of his health he was a painful, laborious Preacher; one that did not preach to tickle the ear, but to wound the heart; not to please, but to profit;

profit ; not seeking the applause of the people, but the salvation of their souls : This all know to be true.

Ninthly; Another Jewel that did beautifie and adorn this Reverend Minister, was his excellent gift in Prayer; and herein he was very eminent, and did exceed many, nay I may say most of his Brethren : As *Apollas* was mighty in the Scriptures, so was he (as you all know) mighty in prayer; he was a *Jacob*, very skilful in wrestling with God, like *Moses* he often stood in the gap, and at most Fasts in the time of his health, he was the Minister that was chosen to conclude with prayer; and this heightens the loss that we sustain by the death of this godly Minister, because we have lost the benefit of his prayers, which is an invaluable loss; for though I doubt not but he prays in Heaven for the Church in general, yet I believe he prays not for any in particular, as not knowing what our condition is, *For Abraham knows us not*, for the Saints in Heaven know not what is done upon earth. The losse therefore is the greater, because we have lost not onely a preaching, but a praying-Minister: And give me leave to add, that this excellency in this Minister, is sufficient to prove, 1. That there is a gift of prayer, which some against all reason do deny. 2. That conceived prayers when uttered by one that hath the gift of prayer, are not vain *Tautologies*, or empty repetitions, and a rate of nonsense, as some unjustly charge men with; but they are the breathings of God's Spirit, that pierce not onely into the ears and hearts of the hearers, but into the ears and heart of God himself:

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Tenthly;

Tenthly, The next Jewel was, He had great acquaintance and communion with God; for he was of a long standing in the School of Christ, and a good Proficient in that School. Much acquaintance he had with God, he was often in the Mounce with God, and came down with his face shining, though he in his modesty did not see it; and when he came to dye he was able to say as Dr. *Preston* did when he lay a dying, *I shall change my place, but not my company.*

Eleventhly, Another Jewel was, his comfortable passage out of this World, dying with a great deal of calmness and serenity upon his Conscience; The morning before he dyed, I heard him say these words, *It is one thing to speak of Christ, and of Heaven, and another thing to feel the consolations of Christ and of Heaven, as I do*, clapping his hand on his breast. Another time I heard him say, *The comforts of a holy life are real, soul-supporting; and that he felt the reallity of those comforts, and that by him we might know it was not in vain to serve God.* And I cannot forget this speech the morning before he died, *I am a little straitned, but I care no more for my life, then I do for this fillip: That which was said of old Simeon Luk. 2. may be said of this Reverend Minister, Mr. Simeon Ash, who was a Simeon, a just and devout man, an old Servant of Jesus Christ, one that waited for the consolation of Israel; one that dyed, though not with Christ in his bodily Arms, yet with Christ in the Arms of his Faith; and when he died, could say as it is there, Now Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*

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Lastly ; Another Jewel was his constancy and perseverance; he was not a Reed shaken with every wind, but as firm as a Rock, an immovable Pillar in God's House ;! he was unchangeable in changeable times ; in Religion he was a house built on a Rock, not on the Sand; and as he lived, so he dyed holily , even as the ancient Patriarks that dyed in the Faith, and endured faithfully unto the death.

Now this excellent Minister of Christ thus beautified with these Jewels , is now perished as to his outward man, gathered to God, to Christ, and the blessed company of Saints and Angels. The application that I shall make of this Discourse, is this,

1. To us Ministers.

2. To you of this Parish and Congregation.

First to us Ministers: God hath of late years taken to himself many famous men: Seven of the Lecturers of *Cornhill* are dead, *Mr. Burroughs*, *Dr. Bolton*, *Mr. Sedgewick*, *Mr. Whitaker*, *Mr. Cranford*, *Mr. Vines*, and now *Mr. Ash*. I might name many other excellent Ministers that are dead, as *Dr. Gouge*, *Mr. Walker*, *Mr. Gataker*, *Mr. Marshal*, *Mr. Robinson*, and lately *Mr. Cook*, with many more : Now all these are Warning-pieces from Heaven of Judgements approaching ; *For the righteous perish*, and no man lays it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come. Thus *Methuselah* dyed a year before the Flood: Now *Methuselah* in Hebrew signifies a Messenger of death. Thus *Austin* dyed a little before *Hippo* was taken; and *Pareus* a little before *Hiddleburge* was taken, and *Luther* a little before the Wars in *Germany* began. The death of

the godly is like the separating of the Israelites from the tents of *Corah* and his company, like the taking of *Lot* out of *Sodom*. When the Israelites departed from *Corah* and his company, the earth swallowed them up; and when *Lot* departed out of *Sodom*, God rained down fire and brimstone upon them. Let the thoughts of these things cause us to provide our *Arkes*, to get our *Zoar's*. Let it teach young *Samuels*, to rise up in the room of old *Ely's*; young *Elisha's*, in the room of old *Elijahs*, and young *Timothies*, in the room of *Paul* the aged; that there may be a succession of Gospel Ministers to hold forth the word of life to this Nation. And let us labour to be inheritours of these twelve excellencies, that beautified this our reverend brother.

Secondly, let me speak a few words to you of this Parish; the auditors of this worthy Minister. There is scarce one man of a hundred, that understands the tye and obligation that is betwixt a minister and his people. O the love and affection that ought to be betwixt them! *Paul* tells the *Galatians*, that they could a pluckt out their eyes for him if need were. *Chrysostome* tells us, that when *Miletius* was taken away by death from his people, their hearts sunk with sorrow; and such love had they to him, that they called all their children by his name, and got his picture engraven on their rings. And I have read of *Chrysostome*, that when he was banished from his people, there was not a corner in the City, but was full of people weeping and lamenting. The loss of a godly minister, is a publick loss, and therefore

therefore there ought to be publick mourning; it is a soul loss, and therefore, methinks, every one of you should weep and mourn; you have lost your common father; you of this congregation have lost your spiritual father, your spiritual shepheard; you have lost your eyes, your guide; and indeed it is you that are his flock that must commend your minister by practising that which he preached; said the Apostle, 2 Cor. 3. 1. *Do we again begin to commend our selves, or need we as some others, Epistles of commendations to you, or letters of commendations from you? Ye are our Epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men.* As if the Apostle should say, do we need letters of commendation? is it necessary that we should spend time in commending our ministry; you are our letters of commendation, your holiness and piety commends a minister above all other things. As when a man comes into an Orchard or Vineyard, said *Chrysostome*, and sees every thing skilfully handled, and neatly trimmed, he need not spend time in commending the Vine-dresser or Carpenter; the work it self commends them. So ought it to be among you; when we preach the Funeral Sermons of Ministers, we must look into his Parish or Congregation, and see what letters of commendation there are; whither the proficiency of the Auditors commend their Ministers. I grant, it is not always true; God doth not always give success to a godly Minister, but the worst is yours; I had almost said the curse is yours; but I will speak modestly, the worst is yours. Tell me how many
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of you are able to say, I blesse God that ever such a Minister was sent among us; blessed be God that ever we heard him preach; what seal of his ministry is there here among you? he was in another; and another place in this City; it may be there are people from all places that have been his auditors; what seal of his ministry is there now to be found among you? how many souls hath he pluckt out of the snares of the devil? how many of you have gone away weeping from a Sermon, knocking your breasts, and pricked at the hearts for sin, crying out Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved? your tears and mourning for sin, these are the auditors that commend your ministers. Go home now, and think with yourselves, What can I remember of all the Sermons that I have heard from Mr. *Ash*! and give me leave to tell you, woe be to you, if as your Minister be dead, so all the Sermons that he made dye with him: For as *Abel* being dead, yet speaketh; so shall the Sermons of this worthy Minister at the great day, speak for you, or against you, for they are spiritual talents that God hath betruſted you with, and you must be accountable; both he and you shall appear before the Tribunal of God; your Minister shall be examined, how he can free himself from the guilt of soul blood; and you shall be examined, what fruit you have brought forth, answerable to the means that you have enjoyed; and if it appear that you have been unprofitable and unfruitful hearers, Christ will say, *Cast the unprofitable servant into utter darkness.* But I hope better

better things of you, and things that accompany salvation. Whatever was good in this reverend Minister, let it live in you; and though he be dead, yet let not his sermons that he preached dye with you, but let them be in you; that at the great day, when he and you appear before God, he may be able to say, Here am I, and the Children that thou hast given me,

FINIS.

